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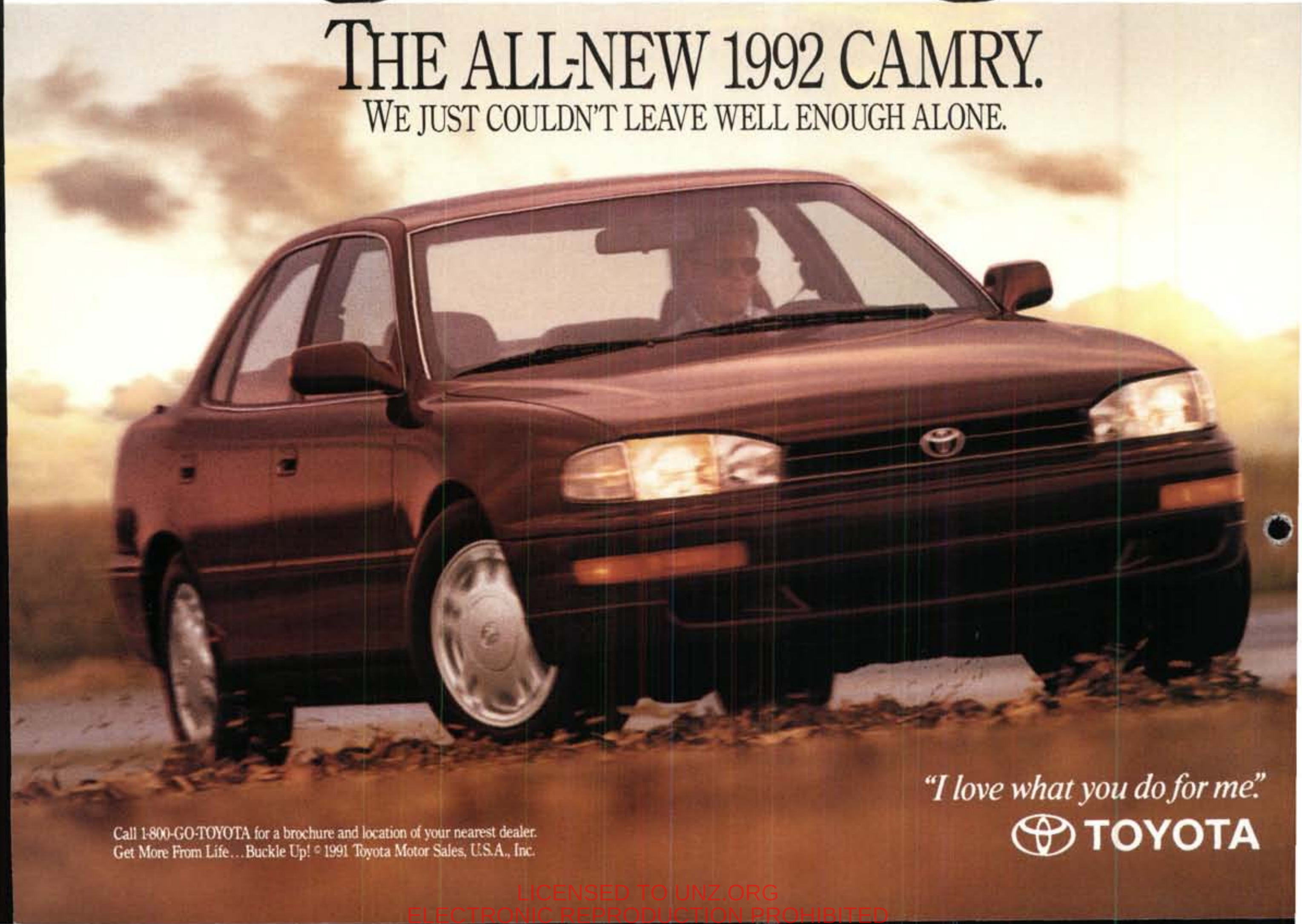

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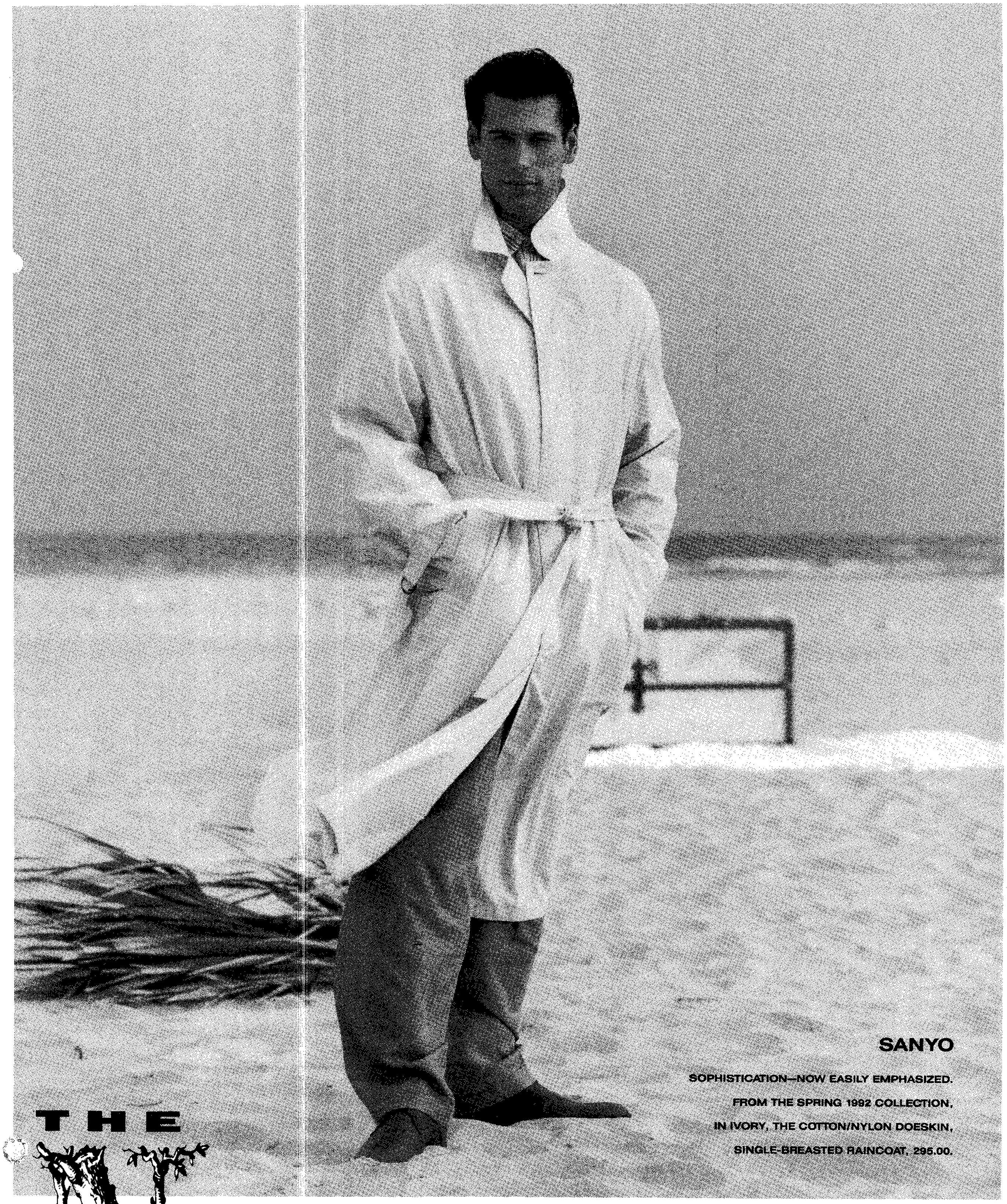

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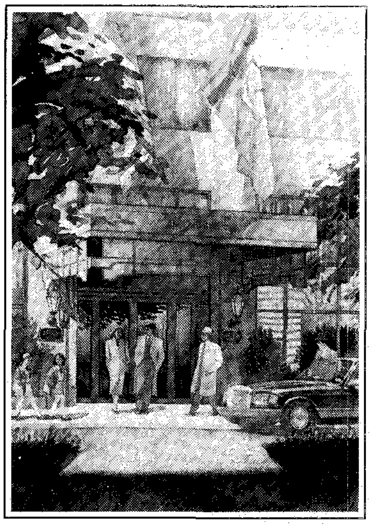

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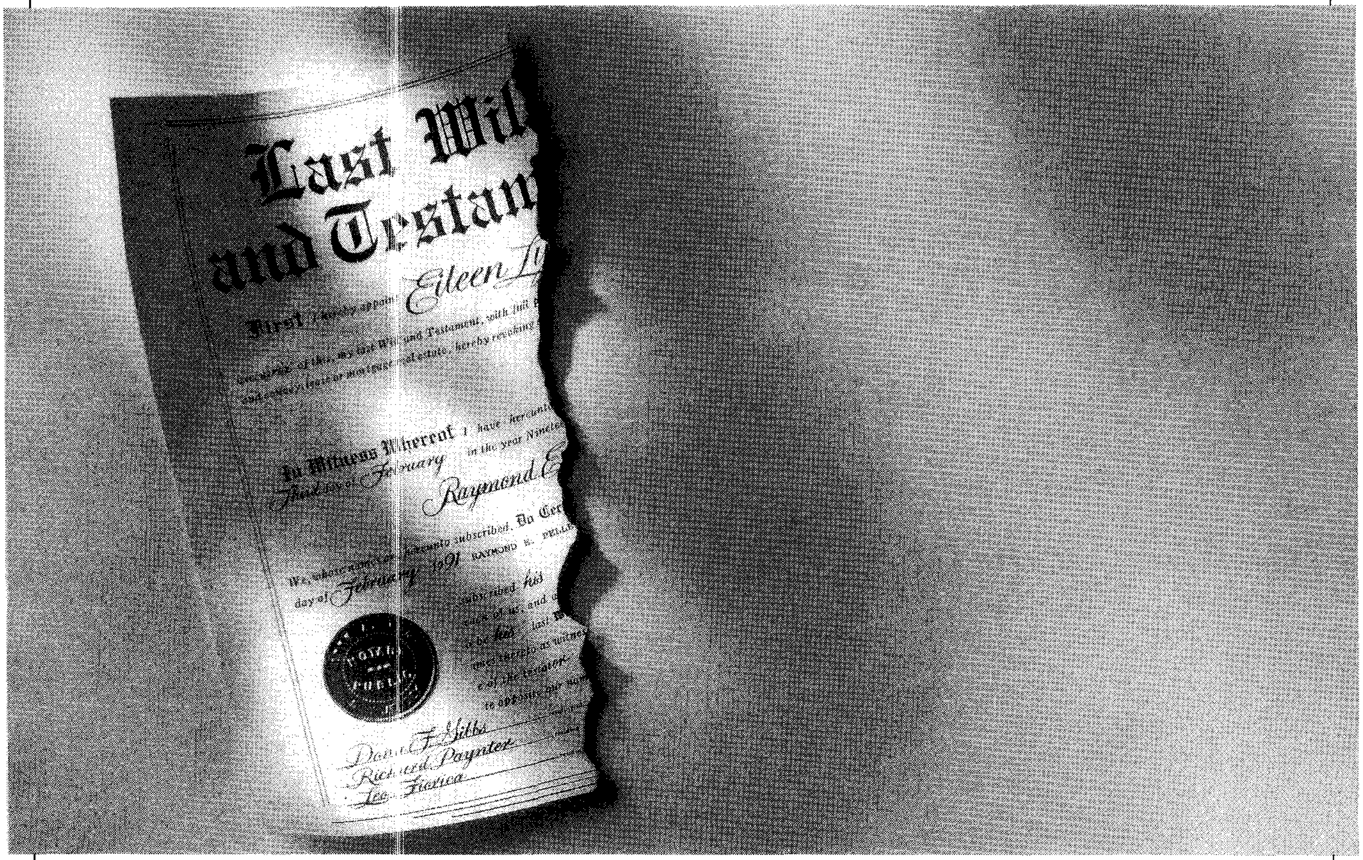

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

OVER the past quarter century, Jorge Ali Triana has directed three movies, a couple of hundred television programs, and around forty plays, and in the process he has examined the texts of dozens of authors, classic and contemporary. If you looked at his recent activity, however, you'd think he had only one collaborator: Gabriel García Márquez. A couple of years ago, the two men made the film "Tiempo de Morir," as well as the television drama "In This Town There Are No Thieves." And during the past six weeks Mr. Triana, who is the founder of the Teatro Popular, in Bogotá, has been rehearsing the actors of a New York company, the Repertorio Español, in his version of García Márquez's novella "The Incredible and Sad Tale of Innocent Eréndira and Her Heartless Grandmother." (The production opens this week.)

Mr. Triana is not blind to the difficulties of adapting García Márquez's work. He argues that much of the Nobelist's fiction is impossible to stage, much less to film. That doesn't stop people from trying, of course. "Eréndira" itself has yielded a recent feature film, directed by Ruy Guerra, and a dance work, performed by Pilobolus. Mr. Triana prefers his own version—which will not attempt to re-create the novella's "physical spaces" but will concentrate on its "dramatic images"—to the previous reworkings. He kept in mind that the original work, which centers on an old woman who forces her granddaughter into prostitution, started out as a linked set of images: it was conceived as a script before it was written as a novella. A scrupulous artist, Mr. Triana pored over García Márquez's original "Eréndira" before fashioning his own. He did not show the writer the final play script, however. Perhaps Mr. Triana wanted to leave his collaborator alone so that the latter could continue working on the screenplay for their next venture: a feature film of Sophocles' "Oedipus Tyrannus," to be shot later this year. "García Márquez adores Oedipus," Mr. Triana says.

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedule and ticket information.)

Boesman and Lena—Athol Fugard has directed this revival of his 1969 play. Keith David, Tsepo Mokone, and Lynne Thigpen make up the cast. Preview on Jan. 28. Opens Jan. 29 at 8. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907.)

Circle Repertory Company—The third play of the season is **THE BALTIMORE WALTZ**, by Paula Vogel. The cast, directed by Anne Bogart, consists of Cherry Jones, Joe Mantello, and Richard Thompson. Previews begin Jan. 29. (99 Seventh Ave. S. 924-7100.)

The Comedy of Errors—A production of Shakespeare's comedy, directed by William Gaskill and presented by Theatre for a New Audience. Previews through Jan. 31. Opens Feb. 1 at 8. (St. Clement's, 423 W. 46th St. 279-4200.)

Crazy for You—A new musical that incorporates nineteen Gershwin songs and has a book by Ken Ludwig. Harry Groener and Jodi Benson lead the cast; Mike Ockrent directed. Previews begin Jan. 31. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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Crazy He Calls Me—Barry Miller portrays an attorney and Polly Draper an idealistic social worker in a play by Abraham Tetenbaum, which is set in the late thirties. Opens Jan. 27 at 6:45. (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

Creditors—Zach Grenier, Caroline Lagerfelt, and Nestor Serrano in August Strindberg's 1889 play. Previews through Feb. 4. Opens Feb. 5 at 8. (CSC, 136 E. 13th St. 677-4210.)

Grandchild of Kings—The first installment in Harold Prince's two-part adaptation of the autobiographies of Sean O'Casey. Presented by the Irish Repertory Theatre and directed by Mr. Prince. Previews begin Jan. 31. (Theatre for the New City, 155 First Ave., at 10th St. 255-0270.)

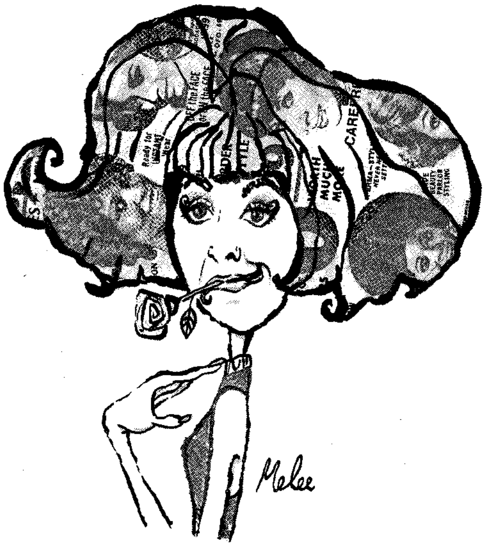
The Home Show Pieces—Four short plays written and directed by, and featuring (in three of the four works), David Greenspan. Opens Jan. 28 at 8. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

Innocent Eréndira and Her Heartless Grandmother—An adaptation of a novella by Gabriel García Márquez; directed by Jorge Ali Triana. Performed in Spanish; simultaneous-English-translation sets are available. Previews through Feb. 2. Opens Feb. 4 at 7. (Repertorio Español, Gramercy Arts Theatre, 138 E. 27th St. 889-2850.)

Julie Halston's Lifetime of Comedy—A one-woman show. Previews Jan. 29-Feb. 2 at 3. Opens Feb. 2 at 7. (Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 691-6226.)

The Most Happy Fella—A revival of Frank Loesser's 1956 musical comedy, starring Spiro Malas and Sophie Hayden. Directed by Gerald Gutierrez, the production orginated at the Goodspeed Opera House, in East Haddam, Connecticut. In previews. (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

The Substance of Fire—Jon Robin Baitz's play, which ran at Playwrights Horizons last spring, moves to Lincoln Center. The cast once again comprises Patrick Breen, Sarah Jessica Parker, Ron Rifkin, Jon Tenney, and Maria Tucci. Previews begin Jan. 31. (Mitzi E. Newhouse. 239-6200.)



Julie Halston

A Woman Without a Name—The Signature Theatre Company's production of a drama by Romulus Linney, adapted from his novel "Slowly by Thy Hand Unfurled." Opens Jan. 30 at 8, and runs through Feb. 16. (Kampo Cultural Center, 31 Bond St. 262-1647.)

OPENED RECENTLY

Beau Jest—A comedy by James Sherman. (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780.)

Bella, Belle of Byelorussia—A comedy by Jeffrey Essmann, with songs by Michael John LaChiusa. (WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. 206-0523. Closes Feb. 2.)

Bluebeard—The Ridiculous Theatrical Company revives Charles Ludlam's 1970 play. (Charles Ludlam, 1 Sheridan Sq. 691-2271. Closes Feb. 2.)

Catskills on Broadway—A festival of ethnicity and all but unbroken laughter. Freddie Roman and Mal Z. Lawrence are the Jewish comedians; Dick Capri handles the Italians. The jokes explode around us, and there isn't a dud in the lot. Marilyn Michaels, the fourth member of the company, does imitations of imitations. (Reviewed in our issue of 12/23/91.) (Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

Cinderella—The Riverside Shakespeare Company presents an English pantomime version of the fairy tale. (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000.)

Dancing at Lughnasa—How you respond t Brian Friel's wistful autobiographical play depends a good deal on your personality and preoccupations. Either you will find it lovely and lyrical or it will strike you as the memory play from Hell. (11/4/91) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Down the Flats—An autobiographical play by Tony Kavanagh which is set in inner-city Dublin. (Irish Arts Center, 553 W. 51st St. 757-3318.)

Finkel's Follies—A show billed as "a new American musical vaudeville," conceived by and starring Fyvush Finkel. Performances resume Jan. 30. (Westside, 450 W. 42nd St. 307-4100.)

From the Mississippi Delta—In eleven scenes, Endesha Ida Mae Holland dramatizes her own rise (and journey) from the Delta (where she had been a teen-age prostitute) to the University of Minnesota and triumph in academia. The leading character, though, is her mother, a midwife called Aint Baby, who is very well portrayed by Cheryl Lynn Bruce. The role of the author is split between Ms. Bruce, Sybil Walker, and Jacqueline Williams, and the result is a lively and merry evening. (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330.)

Invention for Fathers and Sons—A play by Alan Brody. Presented by the American Jewish Theatre. (Susan Bloch, 307 W. 26th St. 633-9797. Closes Feb. 2.)

I Won't Dance: Steve Ross Sings Fred Astaire—Mr. Ross in an "all-singing, all-playing, non-dancing" tribute. (Theatre at St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. For information about tickets, call 688-7253.)

Lips Together, Teeth Apart—Two couples share a beach house on Fire Island over the Fourth of July weekend, in Terrence McNally's very funny play about a number of serious matters. With Hillary Bailey Smith, Jonathan Hadary, Roxanne Hart, and Anthony Heald; directed by John Tillinger. (7/8/91) (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782.)

A Little Hotel on the Side—The National Actor Theatre's production of the 1894 farce by Georges Feydeau and Maurice Desvallières. The translation is by John Mortimer. The cast includes Rob Lowe, Maryann Plunkett, Tony Randall, and Lynn Redgrave. Directed by Tom Moore. This play ran on Broadway in 1957 under the title "Hotel Paradiso." (Belasco, 111 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

Mad Forest—This Caryl Churchill play, written after a "fact-finding" trip to post-Ceausescu Romania, was directed by Mark Wing-Davey (he formerly ran the Central School of Speech and Drama, in London), and the ensemble acting in it is so wonderful that the production is definitely worth seeing, even though the play may leave you feeling that Churchill's visit (which lasted only a few weeks) and her own abiding Marxism do not quite equip her to tackle the complexities of post-totalitarian Europe.

(Perry Street Theatre, 31 Perry St. 302-6989. Closes Feb. 2.)

Marvin's Room—A play about dying, suffering, and sacrifice in one family, written in a style so frisky as to set the teeth permanently on edge. There is a fine performance by Mark Rosenthal as a smoldering young man. Also with Alice Drummond, Laura Esterman, and Tim Monsion. Scott McPherson is the dramatist, David Petrarca the director. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

Park Your Car in Harvard Yard—Jason Robards, white-bearded and padded to portliness, plays a retired teacher, and Judith Ivey is a former student who gets a job as his housekeeper, in Israel Horovitz's very funny, touching play, which is set in Gloucester, Massachusetts, over a year's time. Under Zoe Caldwell's expert direction, the performances are as near to perfection as makes no matter. (11/18/91) (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

The Real Live Brady Bunch—Episodes from the acclaimed TV series, reënacted by the Annoyance Theatre, of Chicago. Something called "The Real Live Game Show" comes first. (Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. 475-5120.)

Return to the Forbidden Planet—Gabriel Barré, Julee Cruise, Robert McCormick, and Louis Tucci are all appealing in this light-minded entertainment, a London import that won the Laurence Olivier Award for best musical in a year when it might have gone to "Miss Saigon" (whose producer's subsequent indignation led to the creation of a new award category). The show—a patchwork of beloved pop songs stitched together with Shakespeareana—has almost nothing to do with the cult movie it is based on, and still less to do with "The Tempest." Written and directed by Bob Carlton, it is more than anything else an occasion to laugh a bit and rock out a lot. (Variety Arts, Third Ave. at 14th St. 239-6200.)

Sight Unseen—A new play by Donald Margulies. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907.)

Two Shakespearean Actors—Richard Nelson's new play (it's sort of comical-historical-tragical) rewards you with the kind of theatrical high you don't usually associate with Broadway. It's difficult to decide, though, whether to give most of the credit to Mr. Nelson (who's written a wonderful play), to Brian Bedford and Victor Garber (who play the two nineteenth-century rivals of the title), to Jack O'Brien (for his direction of the huge and mostly excellent ensemble), or even to the Cort itself, that jewel of a theatre any visit to which is a little like a journey back in time. (1/27/92) (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200. Closes Feb. 9.)

Tubes—A work by Blue Man Group. (Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370.)

The Visit—Jane Alexander and Harris Yulin in the Roundabout's revival of a play by Friedrich Dürrenmatt (as adapted by Maurice Valency). (Reviewed in this issue.) (Criterion Center, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

LONG RUNS

AND THE WORLD GOES 'ROUND: THE KANDER & EBB MUSICAL: A musical revue, with Karen Ziémba, Joel Blum, Terry Burrell, Marcus Lovett, and Marin Mazzie. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.). . . **BREAKING LEGS:** The Mafia meets Off Broadway. Philip Bosco and Vincent Gardenia play a pair of mobsters who back a new play in order to win a young dramatist for Gardenia's daughter. Tom Dulack wrote the comedy; John Tillinger directed it. With Larry Storch, Karen Valentine, Ronald Maccone, and Nick Wyman. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.). . . **CATS:** Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to John Napier's sets and costumes. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200.). . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** The longest-running long run turns thirty-two in May. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838.). . . **FOREVER PLAID:** Stuart Ross's loving tongue-in-cheek salute to the "guy groups" of the fifties is a real treat. Bring your mom. Hell, bring the whole family. (Steve McGraw's, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400.). . . **GRAND HOTEL:** The dazzling imagination of Tommy Tune's direction and choreography and the dazzling scenery by Tony Walton almost make up for the inner vacancy of this show, but not quite. The story and characters are skimpy and the music is undistinguished. Nevertheless, there isn't a boring moment. The show recently moved to the Gershwin; performances here begin Feb. 4. (51st St. west of Broadway. 586-6510.). . . **LOST IN YONKERS:** There's not one glimmer of honesty or authenticity in this family melodrama by Neil Simon. Set in Yonkers during the Second World War, it's about what happens when a cowering, pathetic man has to leave his two adolescent sons with his intimidating mother for the better part of a year. (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211.). . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** The stars of this musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel are John Napier's settings and David Hersey's lighting. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.). . . **MISS SAIGON:** Oh, the horror! The horror! (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200.). . . **NUNSENSE:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.). . . **PAGEANT:** A musical spoof of beauty contests. Book and lyrics by Bill Russell and Frank Kelly and music by Albert Evans. Conceived and directed by Robert Longbottom. (Blue Angel, 321 W. 44th St. 262-3333.). . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** This much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets (by Maria Björnson), everything about the show is negligible. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.). . . **THE SECRET GARDEN:** This lovely musical adaptation of the classic children's story by Frances Hodgson Burnett isn't just a kiddie show. Subtle, charming, intelligent, and wholly literary in its approach to adaptation, it manages both to be faithful to the spirit of the book and to comment on the particular moment in time that produced it. (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200.). . . **SONG OF SINGAPORE:** A musical with a promising concept: turn a Polish veterans' hall into a Singapore night club, circa 1941, and spill murder and mayhem onto the premises. Unfortunately, the lavish settings (by John Lee Beatty) and the musical talent cannot conceal a very thin story and a host of excruciatingly bad jokes. (17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. 228-0844.). . . **THE WILL ROGERS FOLLIES:** The sets by Tony Walton, the direction and choreography by Tommy Tune, the costumes by Willa Kim, and the row upon row of Ziegfeld girls make a feast for the eyes, but the funny bone and heart are neglected. Keith Carradine makes an engaging Rogers, but that is not enough, despite Cy Coleman's pleasant score. (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 730-8200.)

DANCE

THE photo in the ad is by Annie Leibovitz. It shows, from behind, a woman outdoors, skipping. She wears pants, a loose coat, and a hat. You can glimpse her face, sort of. (The image is a little blurry.) Superimposed on the coat, at about the level of the shoulder blades, are the words "Twyla's back." Cute—but true. Twyla Tharp makes dances worth watching, but ever since she disbanded her company a lot of those dances have been hard to find. Recently, though, she put together a small pickup group (including Robert LaFosse, Kevin O'Day, and Shawn Stevens), and for the next two weeks, at City Center, they will perform new works and classics like "Nine Sinatra Songs" and "Ocean's Motion."

Tharp herself is also back dancing in public after time off, and it befits her antic sense of occasion that she should return in something called "Men's Piece." Which programs should you see? All of them—who knows how long this new group will last? Dance is under all kinds of pressure these days, and you can't count on catching up with it later. Remember, this is the season when Twyla's back, but the Joffrey isn't.

THE BOFFINS BAFFLED

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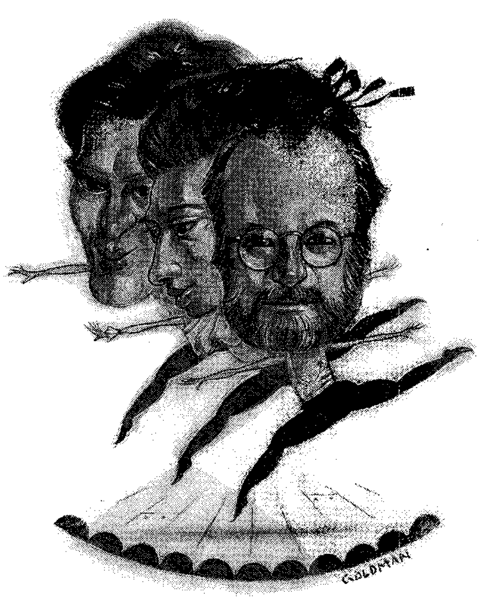


Peter Martins, Mozart, and Charles Wuorinen (New York City Ballet's "Delight of the Muses")

New York City Ballet—Jan. 28 at 8: "Les Petits Riens," "Mozartiana," and "Prague Symphony."... ¶ Jan. 29 at 8: "Mozart Serenade," "Delight of the Muses" (première), and "Divertimento No. 15."... ¶ Jan. 30 at 8: "Monumentum Pro Gesualdo/Movements for Piano and Orchestra," "Afternoon of a Faun," "Antique Epigraphs," and "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue."... ¶ Jan. 31 at 8: "The Goldberg Variations" and "Stars and Stripes."... ¶ Feb. 1 at 2: "Mozart Serenade," "Behind the China Dogs," and "Stars and Stripes."... ¶ Feb. 1 at 8: "Le Tombeau de Couperin," "Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux," "The Waltz Project," and "Prague Symphony."... ¶ Feb. 2 at 1: "The Goldberg Variations" and "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue."... ¶ Feb. 2 at 7: "Delight of the Muses," "Afternoon of a Faun," "Antique Epigraphs," and "Divertimento No. 15."... ¶ Feb. 4 at 8: "Interplay," "Afternoon of a Faun," "Antique Epigraphs," and "Glass Pieces."... ¶ Feb. 5 at 8: Divertimento from "Le Baiser de la Fée," "The Cage," "Duo Concertant," and "Dances at a Gathering." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Through Feb. 23.)

Twyla Tharp and Dancers—Jan. 28 at 8: A special program of "Ocean's Motion" and previews of "Octet," "Grand Pas: Rhythm of the Saints" (with guest artist Patrick Dupond on this night only), and "Men's Piece."... ¶ Jan. 29 and Feb. 4 at 8: "Ocean's Motion," "Little Ballet," "Grand Pas: Rhythm of the Saints" (New York première), and "Nine Sinatra Songs."... ¶ Jan. 30 and Feb. 1 at 8, and Feb. 2 at 3: "Sextet" (première), "Men's Piece" (New York première), and "Golden Section," from "The Catherine Wheel."... ¶ Jan. 31 and Feb. 5 at 8, and Feb. 1 at 2: "Deuce Coupe," "Octet" (New York première), and "Nine Sinatra Songs." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907. Through Feb. 9.)

Nikolais and Murray Louis Dance—Jan. 28-29 and Feb. 1 at 8: "Temple," sextet from "Graph," "Index," "Aurora" (première), and "Bach II."... ¶ Jan. 30-31 at 8 and Feb. 2 at 2: Group dance from "Sanctum," "Blue Streak" (première), "Dramatis Personae," "A Fine Line" (première), and "Mechanical Organ."... ¶ Feb. 1 at 2: A family matinée program.... ¶ Feb. 4-5 at 8: "Pond," "Aperitif," "Intrados," and "Where Phantoms Gather" (New York première). (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Through Feb. 9.)

Dorothy Jungels—With her company, the Everett Dance Theatre, in "The Science Project," a full-length piece. (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Jan. 30-Feb. 1 at 8 and Feb. 2 at 3.)

Beppie Blankert—The Dutch choreographer presents "Charles," a new work, performed by John Taylor and Fabian Galamin. A Danspace Project offering. (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 529-2318. Jan. 30-Feb. 2 at 8.)

NIGHT LIFE

COUNTRY is cool again, and we've decided not to fight it. We went out and bought Garth Brooks' blockbuster album; we even rented "City Slickers." And the other night we were at the Knitting Factory to see Sally Timms and Lonesome Bob. Ms. Timms is a member of the British rock group the Mekons; Lonesome Bob, whose real name is Bob Chaney, is a New York-based singer-guitarist who used to be a singer-drummer for the Ben Vaughn Combo. Along with Tony Maimone on twelve-string guitar, the two played a blissful set of cover tunes and originals—all country, or close enough. Most of the songs were of the reflective variety, less likely to be about pickup trucks and boozing than about broken hearts. These had the mournful, late-night feel of groups like Mazzy Star and the Cowboy Junkies. Ms. Timms has a graceful, languorous stage presence and an affecting voice. Her style is trancelike: she never pushes a note too hard, but seems always to be tapped into some private emotion. We liked Mr. Chaney, too. He's N.B.A. height, wears a ponytail, and has a deep, resonant voice. His encore rendition of Clarence Carter's "Patches" was one of the highlights of the evening. Unfortunately, this collaboration was a one-shot deal. Ms. Timms was heading back to England to join her fellow-Mekons, and the next time New Yorkers will have a chance to see her will probably be during the band's next tour. Mr. Chaney, however, can be seen at the Ludlow Street Café later this month; if you really have a craving for country music, you won't have to work too hard to satisfy it.

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town.... ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—**DAVID STALLER**, whom you may know from Broadway stages, from cabarets about town, or from the soaps ("All My Children," for example), is currently at work in the Oak Room. Mr. Staller's subjects here are "Noël and Cole," as in Coward and Porter. The late show on Fridays and Saturdays is "Americans Abroad," as in American composers living in London. Shows at nine-thirty Tuesdays through Thursdays, and at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

Arthur's Tavern, 57 Grove St. (675-6879)—At this quirky, endearing Village watering hole, the musicians work in a well ringed by a bar—a setup that seems to bring out the latent show-biz tendencies in some of the bar's patrons. Mondays belong to the Grove Street Stompers, Tuesdays through Thursdays to Al Bundy, Fridays and Saturdays to Mabel Godwin, and Sundays to Lee Lorenz and the Creole Cookin' Jazz Band. Music from nine-thirty.

Ballroom, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—It's everything a cabaret should be: sleek, elegant, intimate, and slightly decadent. It also offers something that other cabarets do not: tapas, which come from the Spanish restaurant adjoining the club. The Ballroom will be in a Brazilian groove for the next few weeks. **ZIZI POSSI** performs Jan. 28-Feb. 1, and **ROSA MARIA** steps in on Feb. 4, for five nights. Shows Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine; Fridays and Saturdays at nine and eleven-fifteen. Closed Mondays.

Birdland, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—Many musicians who visit this jazz house are honored—if that's the word—by having their portraits done, "in concert," by the house artist. These impressionistic renderings round out a glossy décor that includes flying-saucer light fixtures, burgundy velvet drapes, and some neon wading birds. The **HARPER BROTHERS** sextet will be here Jan. 31-Feb. 1. Music from nine. Dining.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—This blue-on-blue club is the place to find big-league jazz artists; it's an institution and it knows it: how many other clubs sell their own belt buckles? The **DIZZIE GILLESPIE** jamboree draws to a close Jan. 28-Feb. 2, with the legendary trumpeter taking part in a program titled "To Diz, with Love." **TITO PUENTE** and the **GOLDEN LATIN JAZZ ALL-STARS** (including such notables as **MONGO SANTAMARIA** and **PAQUITO D'RIVERA**) start up on Feb. 4. Music from nine. Dining.

Blue Willow, 644 Broadway, at Bleecker St. (673-6480)—This room is oddly Victorian for lower Broadway, a region almost exclusively devoted to the celebration of youth culture. You won't find any funky murals or drinks with funny names here, just marble walls, antique furnishings, and a ceiling that would be hard to hit with a baseball. It's an agreeable place for conversation, which is probably why the small jazz combos that set up here nightly often get relegated to being background music. Music from seven-thirty Sundays through Thursdays, and from nine Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—Next door, there's a bustling, garishly lit market. Within the narrow walls of this venerable piano-and-bass preserve, however, everything is easy on the eyes and ears. Music from ten. Dining.

Café Sin-é, 122 St. Marks Pl. (982-0370)—A small, peach-walled storefront. Sin-é is usually given over to a young, earthy crowd that drinks Rolling Rock or café au lait and waits for some Irish musician or other to blow in and play a set. The café doesn't have a schedule per se, so it's often after the fact that one hears that some great Irish rocker has made a stop here. A frustrating state of affairs, perhaps, but one can have fun just hoping, waiting, and watching the door. Music generally begins at about eight-thirty.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a snug, windowless enclave in the doorman district, features discreet waiters, wraparound pastel murals, and the **MODERN JAZZ QUARTET**. The quartet, which has been doing its fastidious swinging for more than thirty years and which has over four hundred pieces in its repertoire, tends to play in big halls these days, so its occasional layovers in this intimate space are to be treasured. Sets at eight-forty-five and ten-forty-five Tuesdays through Saturdays.... ¶ Across the hall, in Bemelmans Bar, **RONNY WHYTE** presides at the piano from nine-thirty Tuesdays through Saturdays.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—The city's most famed rock club, a dark, narrow cave with neon-beer-sign stalactites and ancestral graffiti, is part sacred burial ground and part historic landmark, but it hasn't succumbed to nostalgia: new and used bands of every stripe continue to pass through nightly. Music from eight-thirty Sundays through Thursdays and from nine-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays.

Chicago B.L.U.E.S., 73 Eighth Ave., at 13th St. (255-7373)—A recently inaugurated club that promises to "feature only Chicago-area blues artists working with their regular Chicago blues bands," a concept that may not appeal to New York blues artists. **BIG TIME SARAH**, a big woman with a big voice, who gives the roadhouse classics the royal bump-and-grind treatment, can be found here Jan. 28-Feb. 1. Music starts at nine Tuesdays through Thursdays, and at nine-thirty Fridays and Saturdays. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

Condon's, 117 E. 15th St. (254-0960)—In the shadow of the Zeckendorf Towers sits this stucco-walled grotto, whose intimate scale makes it a fine spot for jazz. A quartet led by **CARRIE SMITH** and **ROLAND HANNA** performs Jan. 28-Feb. 2; the **DON PULLEN** quintet begins a week-long engagement on Feb. 4. Shows Tuesdays through Sundays at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty, Fridays and Saturdays at nine-thirty, eleven-thirty, and one.

Continental Divide, 25 Third Ave., at St. Marks Pl. (529-6924)—Young, loud, and rude.

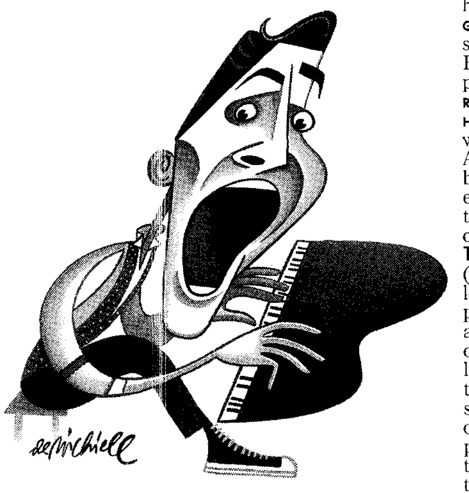
N.Y.U. students like it here, as do punks, weekend punks, and anyone with a taste for rough-and-tumble garage-rock music. There's not a lot to look at—except the band and your fellow-patrons. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at ten, Fridays at midnight, and Saturdays at eleven.

FAT TUESDAY'S, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—Through the iffy-looking side door, down the famous fun-house tunnel that's lined with mirrors and corrugated tin, and down a short flight of stairs, you'll find this softly lit, low-ceilinged, roughly Manhattan-shaped jazz preserve. Tenor saxophonist **ILLINOIS JACQUET**, a big-band-era survivor, leads his group here Jan. 28-Feb. 2. **NEW YORK VOICES**, five singers backed by a trio, begins a run on Feb. 4. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL**, the Thomas Edison of reverb, leads a trio. Music from eight. Dining.

KNICKERBOCKER, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A busy bar-and-grill in the piano-bass district. The musicians set up in the dining room, a clubby-looking space with leather banquettes and well-preserved collectibles: Sunday *Herald Tribune* covers, First World War posters, Hirschfeld cartoons. Up front, at the bar, you can keep your eye on the musicians, the conversationalists, and sidewalk life. Music from about nine-thirty.

KNITTING FACTORY, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—A frat house for the avant-garde. In some ways, the Knitting Factory doesn't really belong in New York: the cover charge is too reasonable, the management is too laid-back, the audiences are too polite. It's a slice of post-collegiate counterculture that somehow landed on Houston Street. The schedule, in part: **PAUL MOTIAN'S ELECTRIC BEBOP** on Jan. 31; **ELLIOTT SHARP'S CARBON** on Feb. 1. Music after nine.

LONE STAR ROADHOUSE, 240 W. 52nd St. (245-2950)—Spiffed-up theatre patrons walk by this club's façade—a Silver Eagle bus, with tires you can kick—and scratch their heads. Inside, big bearded guys with cowboy hats rub elbows at the bar while newcomers study the Texas memorabilia and, upstairs, the display of vintage Gibson guitars. The dining room, where bands hold sway, features a Wright Brothers-era airplane suspended from the ceiling, a dance floor where you can kick up some dust, and a balcony for quiet types. **JOHN CAFFERTY** is here on Jan. 31; **ROOMFUL OF BLUES** performs on Feb. 1; and **JR. WELLS** claims Feb. 5. Music after nine. Dining.



Mark Nadler at L'Omnibus de Maxim's

LUDLOW STREET CAFÉ, 165 Ludlow St. (353-0536)—A below-stairs room that looks like a spruced-up tenement-building apartment. There's cheap Ecuadoran food, a Greater East Village crowd, and, every Monday night, **BEAT RODEO**, a straight-shooting bar band that plays a mix of country, blues, Dylan, Byrds, the Velvets, and various found pop numbers. Sets begin at ten during the week and at midnight on weekends.

L'OMNIBUS DE MAXIM'S, 680 Madison Ave., at 61st St. (980-6988)—A don't-clap-just-rattle-your-jewelry kind of place, where patrons eat pasta from deep dishes and, occasionally, dip French fries into silver gravy boats filled with ketchup. Singer/wacky guy **MARK NADLER** is the current attraction here. Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays, beginning at nine.

RAINBOW & STARS, 30 Rockefeller Plaza (632-5000)—Not to be confused with its richer cousin, the Rainbow Room, which is just down the hall. There, you'll find expansive Art Deco glitter; here, intimate nineties glitter. The performers, with their backs to the window, have to compete with a view of the Hudson, the George Washington Bridge, and beyond. Singer-pianist **BILLY STRITCH**—formerly of Montgomery, Plant, and Stritch—is going it alone here through Feb. 1. Stritch has just released his first solo record, a collection of pop and jazz songs by Cole Porter, Antonio Carlos Jobim, and Michele Brourman, among others. **ROSEMARY CLOONEY** begins a month-long gig on Feb. 4. Shows from nine. Dining. Closed Mondays.

RUSSIAN TEA ROOM, 150 W. 57th St. (265-0947)—A new year, a new season. The restaurant's small, nicely appointed cabaret recently added a new-singers series; performances will take place on the first Monday of each month. This week's main star is **JUDY KAYE**, who appears on Feb. 2; **CRAIG CARNELIA** and **SALLY MAYES** take the Monday-night slot, on Feb. 3. Shows at eight (with a second set sometimes added at ten-thirty). Dining and, of course, drinking.

SOUNDS OF BRAZIL, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—The closest thing in Manhattan to a rain forest, this venerable club has many selling points: tropical drinks, Brazilian food, faux palm trees, a thatch-roofed bar. The live music is primarily from Africa, Brazil, and the Caribbean, and the dance floor is usually hopping. **CHRIS WALKER** performs on Jan. 30. The fine a-cappella outfit **LADYSMITH BLACK MAMBAZO**, which put the grace into Paul Simon's "Graceland," is here on Feb. 2. Music from nine Tuesdays through Thursdays, and from ten Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—If you arrive late for a show at this shrine of jazz, you run the risk of being seated in the glass-enclosed terrace, which means you'll need a periscope to see the show and a parka to live through it. Otherwise, Sweet Basil is just the right environment for patrons—chiefly because it has a silence-or-else policy during shows. A group called Borderline (which was formerly known as the Manhattan New Music Project) is on hand Jan. 28-29. **MULGREW MILLER'S** threesome claims Jan. 30-Feb. 2, and a trio comprising **CEDAR WALTON**, **RON CARTER**, and **BILLY HIGGINS** begins a two-week stay on Feb. 4. An electrified big band belonging to trumpeter **MILES EVANS** is in action on Mondays. Tee-off time is ten. Dining.

TRAMPS, 45 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—Thanks to low lighting, muralled pillars, ironwork, and a beautifully restored old tin ceiling, this loft space manages to seem homey. The sound system can be overwhelming, but the place is big enough to accommodate both those who want to lose their hearing and those who don't. Zydeco, soul, blues, and rock are the main order of business here. **WAYNE TOUPS & ZYDECAJUN** work out on Jan. 29, along with the World Famous Bluejays. The Texas-blues singer-and-guitarist **JOHNNY COPELAND** is in action on Feb. 1. Sets at eight and eleven weeknights, eight-thirty and eleven-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—This windowless, slice-of-pie basement has an illustrious history that embraces everyone from Judy Holliday to Lenny Bruce, from Pete Seeger and Leadbelly to Miles Davis and Sonny Rollins. The **JOHN ABERCROMBIE** trio performs Jan. 28-Feb. 2; pianist **DOROTHY DONEGAN** leads a trio as of Feb. 4. Donegan has a virtuosic technique, which reflects both her classical training and her days as an Art Tatum protégée. But she's equally renowned for the vaudevillian antics that have been the trademark of her fifty-year career: dancing, stomping, rolling her head, impersonating jazz divas, and generally raising Cain. Mondays are reserved for the **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA**. Music after nine-thirty.

ZINNO, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A rarity among jazz clubs: somewhere you'd go to eat even if there were no music. The food is Italian and the musicians, who set up in a room between the bar and the dining room, are first-rate. **JANE JARVIS** and **ED POLCER** hold sway Jan. 27-Feb. 1. Bass-player **MICHAEL MOORE** plays in various ensembles for two weeks, beginning on Feb. 2. Music from eight.

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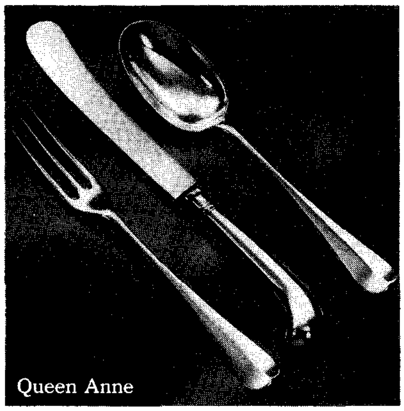

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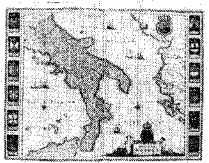

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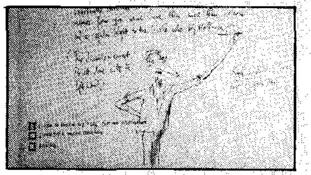

Ronald Searle Christmas card, London 1940s (detail)
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EDGE OF NIGHT LIFE

SINCE Sound Factory (530 West 27th Street) currently peaks between 5 and 6 A.M. on Sundays, what's a diehard to do between dinner and dawn? A novel idea might be to get a good night's sleep: turn in around the time “Saturday Night Live” presents its musical guest, set the clock for an early alarm, and dancing suddenly becomes a top-of-the-morning aerobic workout, not unlike yoga or running around the Reservoir. After a few hours of keeping the heart rate sprinting, one is flush for brunch and a museum-filled day.

Recently, however, a less wholesome, though more enticing, solution to the Saturday-night problem has emerged. In an enterprising attempt at exploiting club loyalty, the folks from 27th Street have opened Sound Factory Bar, on the site that once housed Private Eyes (12 West 21st Street). And whereas the latter was the white-on-white apex of the past decade's obsession with California dreaming, S.F.B. has blackwashed everything. The club's owners have also hocked the video machines and ripped out the engulfing ellipse that served as the central bar, leaving a catering-hall-size dance floor; slapped in the darkest lighting gels available; hung a new, bass-heavy sound system; and carved out a stage where the city's biggest video screen used to be, all of which has transformed the space into a forty-per-cent-reduced Xerox of the big guy—a Sound Factory Lite. The only problem: too many eventual Factory workers want to punch in here first. “How long do you expect me to wait out in the freezing cold?” hollered a tough young lady wearing earrings that must smack her silly when she dances. Told that she couldn't enter until enough people exited, she demanded of anyone and everyone, “How do you expect me to keep my butt warm in the meantime? Huh?” We thought of suggesting a brisk jog, but the heavy clink of her earrings brought us to our senses.

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY—PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

ICE CAPADES—Stars on skates. (Meadowlands Arena. Jan. 28-Feb. 2. For information, call 1-201 935-3900. . . . ¶ Nassau Coliseum. Feb. 4-9. For information, call 1-516 794-9300.)

"ISRAEL: THE NEXT GENERATION"—Final performances of a two-week festival of Israeli arts. Jan. 27-28 at 8: “Jabar's Head,” a multilingual cabaret work presented by a group of Arab actors from Haifa. . . . ¶ Jan. 27 at 8 and Jan. 28 at 2: “The Summer of Aviya,” a play by Gila Almagor. Performed in English. . . . ¶ Jan. 29-30 and Feb. 1 at 8, and Feb. 2 at 2 and 7: The Gesher Theatre Company presents Tom Stoppard's “Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead,” in Russian, with English-version headsets available. . . . ¶ Feb. 1 at 7:30: Shlomo Artzi, billed as “the Israeli Bruce Springsteen,” in concert. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100.)

JOHN JESURUN—Presenting “Shatterhand Massacree.” (La Mama Annex, 66 E. 4th St. 475-7710. Jan. 30-Feb. 2 at 7:30.)

"THE MONKEY KING"—A Chinese opera performed by the New Generation Drama Association of Taiwan, in honor of the Chinese New Year. This is the Year of the Monkey. (Taipei Theatre, 1221 Sixth Ave., at 48th St. 373-1850. Jan. 30-Feb. 1 at 7:30 and Feb. 2 at 2. Through Feb. 9.)

ERIC BOGOSIAN—In a benefit performance for Franklin Furnace. The evening will include a new work, “Dog Show,” as well as more familiar rantings and ravings. (Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. Jan. 31 at 8. For information, call 925-4671.)

P.S. 122—Jan. 30-Feb. 2 at 8: Mr. Fashion in a production of Ethyl Eichelberger's “Nefertiti.” Also on the bill is “The Sarah Vaughan Story.”. . . ¶ Jan. 30-Feb. 2 at 9: Bill Gordh and Debra Wanner host four evenings of improvisational dance, music, and performance. (150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.)

ART

IF Joan Nelson's loftily poetic little paintings suggest antique Arcadian visions twice-filtered through a wistful lens, Alexis Rockman's rather more boorishly aggressive works—and we're talking Kipling here—bring back the barnyard and the evolutionary bog. (Gorney; through February 1.) Each of Rockman's paintings, which run small, medium, and large, is basically a “Just So” story. “How Raccoon Entered Rooster from Rear as Insects Crept and Hovered” could serve as a subtitle for “Barnyard Scene,” a cautionary parable of domesticity. All sorts of *natures mortes* and taxidermic miscegenations show up in this artist's work. Rockman's technique is impeccable, Old Masterish as ever, but the murky colors and obfuscating varnishes of yesteryear have lifted somewhat. With its swampy, prehistoric-Florida setting and its priapically degenerate bull elephant, “Omission: The Fossil Record” speaks at once of Bosch and Bruegel, Disney's “Fantasia” and Salvador Dali, Frederick Church and your local museum's unrenovated diorama. The paintings talk silly, too, however easily they may flow into current movements aimed at enriching our views of social history. They're just too plushly rendered and illustrational to be taken *completely* seriously, which is kind of nice. Like his work, Rockman, who is twenty-nine, is handsome and goofy. This complementary combination proved the perfect foil for Douglas Blau, absurdist critic, who seems to have met in Rockman his symbolic match. Blau's catalogue essay, an ideal and intellectually elegant “Index” of all Rockman's referents and then some, is both a welcome coup de theatre of critical writing and a genuinely touching elegy for academe.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—“The Royal Art of Benin,” a selection of nearly a hundred and fifty brass, ivory, terracotta, and wood sculptures—busts of kings, sceptres of office, side-blow horns, and other regalia—from the kingdom that flourished (from the fourteenth century to the nineteenth) in what is now southern Nigeria. . . . ¶ “American Rococo, 1750-75.” Furniture, silver, paintings, engravings, ceramics, and glass made in pre-Revolutionary America. . . . ¶ The exhibition of East Asian lacquer from the collection of Florence and Herbert Irving may be the most impeccably installed show of the year. The slaty shades of gray on the walls and the pin-spot lights positioned above the vitrines brilliantly set off the already vivid array of red and black boxes, lap desks, *sake* bottles, and such, some of which are inlaid with pearly abalone and gold. There is no fuss here, just punch. Through Feb. 23. . . . ¶ A group of Alpine landscape sketches and local genre scenes by John Singer Sargent, made during a youthful jaunt through the Bernese Oberland, in 1870. Through March 22. . . . ¶ A retrospective of the works of Stuart Davis (1892-1964), including a hundred and seventy-five paintings, murals, watercolors, and drawings. Through Feb. 16. . . . ¶ The redesigned and renovated Arms and Armor galleries are open, and jammed to the hilt. The central Equestrian Court is still here, regally appointed, and it is now surrounded by eight new displays of Japanese, European, Islamic, and American weaponry and armor. . . . ¶ “The Lotus Transcendent.” The Eilenberg collection, from which this show has been selected, is not particularly comprehensive nor focussed on grand masterpieces, but it does sparkle in many unexpected ways. For instance, it includes a group of bronze sculptures from Indonesia that many consider to be the finest privately assembled collection of such material in the world. . . . ¶ Three new permanent galleries are home to more than four hundred nineteenth-century European sculptures and decorative objects. . . . ¶ Candelabras, snuff boxes, and hotel façades are just some of the subject matters depicted in a show of eighteenth-century French drawings. Through March 15. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53rd St.—A small show of recent photographs by Gay Block, of people who risked their lives to save Jews during the Holocaust. Through April 7. . . . ¶ Twenty-one lamps from the sixties and seventies, including a Noguchi “Akari” lamp and a Castiglioni “Taraxacum” lamp. Alas, no lava is in sight. . . . ¶ On display on the ground floor are “Cross Check,” “Power Play,” “High Sticking,” and “Hat Trick,” four new chairs by the hockey-loving Frank Gehry. Through March 23. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The museum is closed for renovation until late spring.

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—A retrospective of the works of William Wegman, which includes nearly two hundred paintings, drawings, photographs, and videotapes. Through April 19. (For more on Wegman, see Galleries—57th Street Area.). . . ¶ Seventy multimedia works, from 1971 to the present, by Alexis Smith. Through March 1. . . . ¶ “Celebrating Calder.” An exhibition, drawn primarily from the museum's collection, that is a fine illustration of Alexander Calder's (1898-1976) breadth and depth. Through Feb. 2. . . . ¶ “Variations on Themes,” a show of serial works in various graphic mediums, by, among others, Terry Winters, Dennis Adams, Kiki Smith, and Jasper Johns. Through March 15. (Open Tuesdays, 1 to 8; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM, Eastern Parkway—“The New Merengue,” an installation in the Grand Lobby, by sculptor Houston Conwill, poet Estella Conwill Majozo, and architect Joseph De Pace. Starts Jan. 31. . . . ¶ “Biomorphicism and Organic Abstraction in Twentieth-Century Decorative Arts.” (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

AMERICAN CRAFT MUSEUM, 40 W. 53rd St.—Two site-specific installations, one by Sam Gilliam, the other by Robert Kushner. (Open daily, except Mondays, 10 to 5.)

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St.—"Motifs and Meanings in Asian Art," a selection of sixty Korean, Chinese, and Japanese works from the Rockefeller collection. Through March 15. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Jewish Museum, at the New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—"The Sigmund Freud Antiquities." Close to a hundred of the two thousand Egyptian, Greek, Roman, and Chinese objects the psychoanalyst collected. Even the ordinary pieces are full of interest, if only because Freud once owned them; for example, there's the small steatite portrait of Amenophis I and his mother, Ahmose-Nofretiri, Egyptian rulers who, in the ultimate resolution of the Oedipus complex, were buried together. The best part of the show is a series of black-and-white photographs—taken in 1938, by Edmund Engelman—of Freud's study and examining room shortly before he fled Vienna for London. Although they are ordinary pictures, they reveal just how Freud lived with his powerful assembly of statues: we find them jammed together in cases, perched atop various pieces of furniture, and lined up at the edge of his desk like an army of history's most exalted foot soldiers. Through Feb. 18. (Open Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Sundays, 11 to 5; Thursdays, 11 to 8; Fridays, 11 to 3.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—Seventeenth-century Dutch drawings—of the landscape, genre, and figure variety—by Rembrandt, Ruisdael, Goltzius, and many others. Through April 26. . . . ¶ A small show of printed books and bindings produced in seventeenth-century Flanders and Holland. Through April 26. . . . ¶ Selections on view from the library's permanent collection include one of its three Gutenberg Bibles, Stevenson's autograph manuscript of "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," and the original scores of symphonies by Brahms and Mahler. Through April 26. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Museum of American Folk Art, Columbus Ave. at 65th St.—A group of late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century *santos*—carved-wood holy objects made by family artisans in Puerto Rico. (Open daily, 11:30 to 7:30.)

National Academy of Design, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—"Hallowed Haunts," a show of seventy-three drawings and watercolors by Charles Addams (1912-88), most of which first appeared in the pages of this magazine. Through March 8. . . . ¶ An exhibition of paintings, drawings, manuscripts, and published works by Samuel F. B. Morse (1791-1872), the founder of the National Academy. Through March 12. (Open Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

The New Museum, 583 Broadway—"1+1+1," a series of recent projects by Alfredo Jaar, primarily in the form of large-scale light-box installations. Through April 19. . . . ¶ "The Big Nothing or Le Presque Rien," a group exhibition in which each artist has been asked to contemplate the notions of emptiness and materiality. Through April 19. (Part of the show runs at the French Embassy, 972 Fifth Ave., at 78th St. Open Mondays, closed Saturdays. Through Feb. 28.). . . ¶ Jeffry Mitchell's installation, titled "My Spirit," consists of rubber, plaster, and latex tableaux of cartoon figures, toy creatures, and other kitschy icons. Through April 19. . . . ¶ In the "don't make me ovah" department: walk by the museum's Broadway window and you may see a museum patron's face age twenty-five years in thirty seconds. It's "The Age Machine" that's doing it, through digital technology and a personal computer. Through April 19. (Open Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, noon to 8.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—A large selection of manuscripts, letters, photographs, and other objects that shed light on the life of Edna St. Vincent Millay (1892-1950). Through Feb. 29. (Berg Collection.). . . ¶ Merlin, Mordred, Gawain, and Galahad leap off the pages and prints of "King Arthur: Looking at the Legend." Through Feb. 22. (Gottesman Exhibition Hall.) (Open Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6.)

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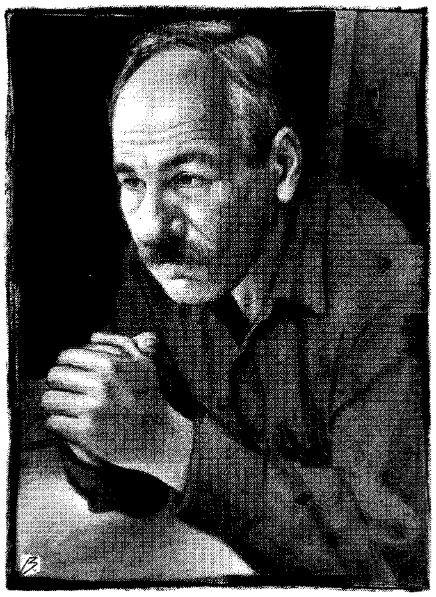


Barnett Newman

Queens Museum of Art, Flushing Meadow Park—Seventeen sculptures and drawings by Mel Chin. Through Feb. 2. . . . ¶ "3 x 3," Ik-Joong Kang's installation of thousands of three-inch-square paintings and collages. Through April 12. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, noon to 5.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—Thirty paintings and sculptures by this year's artists-in-residence: Ada Pilar Cruz, Leonardo Drew, and Eve Sandler. Through March 1. . . . ¶ "Africa and the Diaspora" has nearly a hundred works from the museum's collection, dating from the fifth century to the present. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

Per Kirkeby—The artistic identity of this accomplished Danish painter has been obscured somewhat by the Neo-Expressionist label that has been attached to him. While he paints with a gestural hand, his work is much more contained than that of, say, Baselitz or Penck. Although the eleven essentially abstract paintings here are infused with reminders of Chinese landscape artists, and often conjure up a slightly agitated Matisse, these rocky, cloudy, watery weatherscapes could more appropriately be considered homages to Kandinsky. Through Feb. 22. (Warner, 21 E. 67th St.)

Bill Traylor (1854-1947)—This self-taught artist, a former slave, did not start drawing until he was in his eighties. Although he made art for only a few years, there is an extraordinary resolution to his style. The single-figure portraits of people and animals, most of them in profile, are as primally sophisticated as cave paintings. The drawings with multiple figures are all narratives—sometimes having to do with drinking—in which the same figures are repeated sequentially, as in Egyptian tomb paintings and early-Renaissance religious cycles. While the work is quite charming, it undeniably has a dark side, characterized by such things as fleeing figures, a man and a dog trapped in a triangular pencil-line prison, and a ferocious being with the body of a wolf and the haunting face of a rabid man. Through Feb. 8. (Hirshl & Adler Modern, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St. Open Mondays.)

Short List—**JASPER JOHNS,** Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St. (through March 14); **GASTON LACHAISE,** Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. (open Mondays, through Feb. 22); **JOHN NEWMAN,** Mathes, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St. (through March 7); **MAN RAY** and **MERET OPPENHEIM,** Kent, 47 E. 63rd St. (open Mondays, closed Saturdays, through March 27); **FREDERICK J. SYKES,** Hirschl & Adler, 21 E. 70th St. (through Feb. 22).

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

George Rhoads—Rhoads makes the sort of entertainment art that is suited only to a public space such as an airport: it can keep children and adults distracted without taxing their minds. His colorful mechanical sculptures look like the workings of a distillery but function more like roller coasters for steel and nylon balls. As the little spheres curve, drop, and spin on their journey from top to bottom, they activate various chimes and clickers, producing a clanking sort of music along the way. Through Feb. 5. (Ruth Siegel, 24 W. 57th St.)

William Wegman—Go big or stay home. Three exhibitions this winter are dedicated to exploring the broad range of Wegman's work. The retrospective at the Whitney Museum (organized by the Kunstsmuseum Lucerne) is the most extensive ever for the artist, and will be up for three months. On the gallery front, Holly Solomon (724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.; open Mondays, through Feb. 15) has new paintings and Polaroids. And Pace-MacGill (32 E. 57th St.; through Feb. 22) is showing black-and-white photographs taken in the seventies.

Short List—**MILTON AVERY,** Borgenicht, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through Feb. 1); **JOSE BEDIA** (through Feb. 1) and **RICHARD SHAW** (through Feb. 29), Frumkin-Adams, 50 W. 57th St.; **RONALD BLADEN,** Washburn, 41 E. 57th St. (through Feb. 1); **JORGE CASTILLO** and **FRANCISCO LEIRO,** Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. (open Mondays, through Feb. 1); **GREGORY GILLESPIE,** Forum, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through March 7); **ROBERT GRAHAM,** Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. (through Feb. 1); **TERENCE LA NOUE,** Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. (through Feb. 8); **ELIZABETH NEWMAN,** Galerie Lelong, 20 W. 57th St. (through Feb. 15); **GIUSEPPE PENONE,** Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. (open Mondays, through Feb. 29); **SACHA SOSNO,** Marisa del Re, 41 E. 57th St. (through Feb. 1).

GALLERIES—SoHo

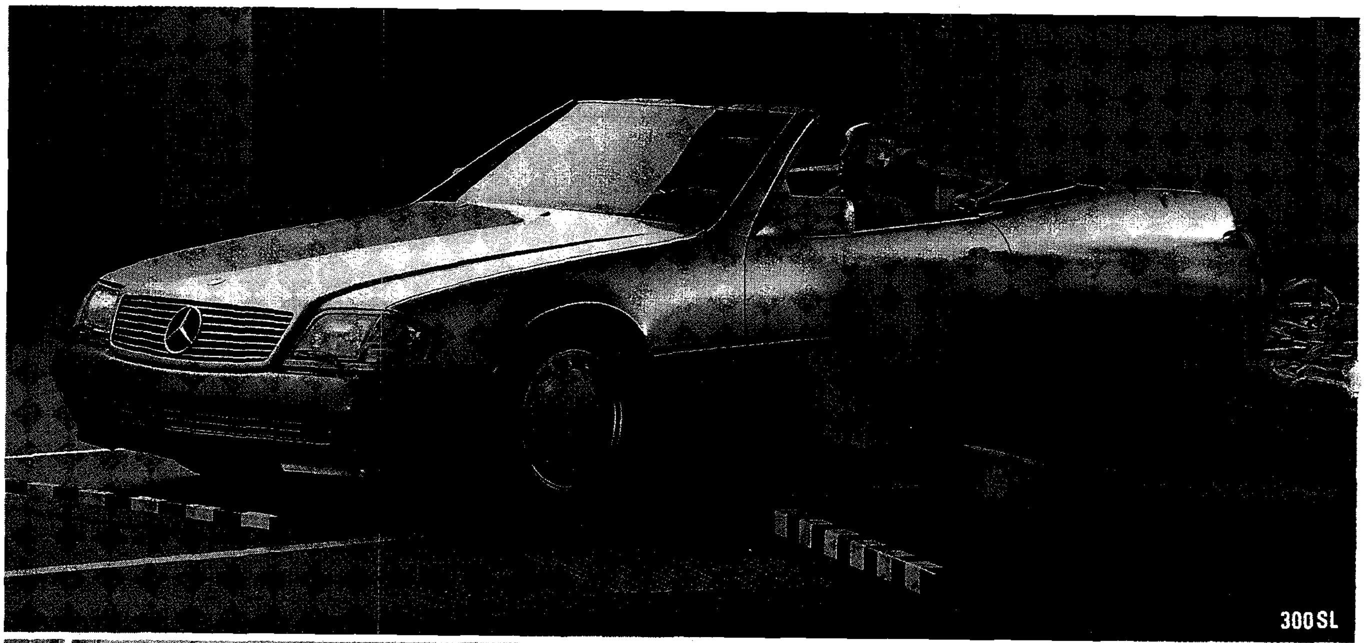
Gregory Amenoff—The first show of drawings by a painter who's been working in the same tiresomely narrow way for a decade and a half. He has expanded his scope somewhat, adding to his Dove-Hartley kind of American abstraction a Martin-Walkowitz edge, but the work's still tedious. Through Feb. 1. (Munroe, 130 Prince St.)

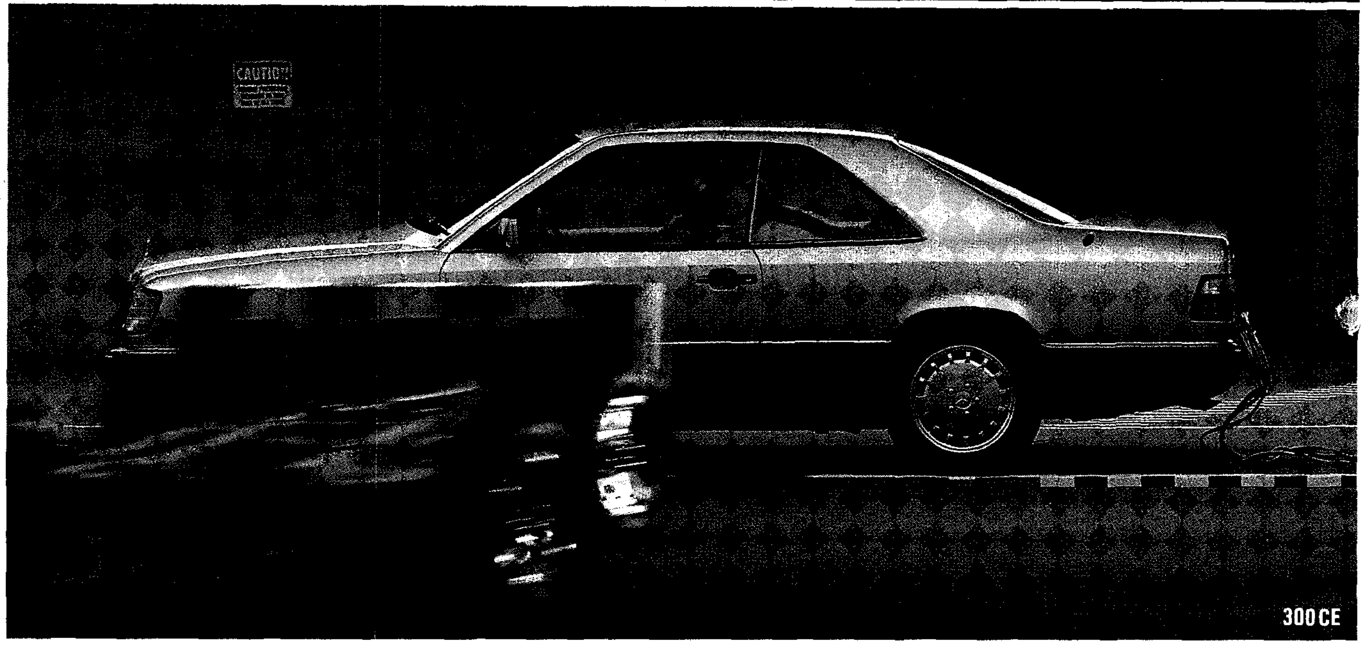
Bård Breivik—Meticulously constructed abstract sculptures made out of black granite, wire, wood, brass, and other materials. These works are fetishistically well done but predictable. Through Feb. 8. (Germans van Eck, 420 West Broadway.)

Michael Chandler—Large, dashing, Richter-like abstract paintings featuring arabesques of smeared paint. They have an exuberance like that of the once ubiquitous Paul Jenkins. Through Feb. 1. (Ala, 560 Broadway.)

Clyde Connell / Ersy—This self-taught nonagenarian from Shreveport, Louisiana, is something of a legend in the South. These figurative wood-and-papier-mâché totems, with iron spikes for feet and heavy rusted springs for breasts, are at once majestic and self-satirical. / But the horrifically cutesy little sculptures by Ersy, of mice, asparagus, ostriches' feet, sieves, and birds' skulls, are strictly gift-shop fare. Through Feb. 1. (Roger, 136 Prince St.)

Moira Dryer—Very beautiful paintings on wood of rainy fields of smeared Kelly green and bloody terra-cotta. The works are heartfelt and somewhat reassuringly depressing. A few shapes and recesses have been cut into the wood here and there, but these more self-consciously postmodernist interventions are not so interesting. They seem superfluous, and distract us from what the artist does so well, which is to paint. Through Feb. 1. (Boone, 417 West Broadway.)

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Lili Dujourie—There are basically two types of work in this show: two-tone marble slabs, some of them ranging across the floor and up a wall, which look as if they were shadows, and leggy steel cabinets that contain or are covered with rumpled cloths cast in plaster. Add to this a spidery cracked mirror and you have an aesthetic that is meant to look deliberately cast off but which is in fact calculatedly romantic. Through Feb. 8. (Louver, 130 Prince St.)

Leon Golub—Four strong new paintings that reaffirm the artist's links to the American social-realist tradition of Shahn and Cadmus. They are large, with cracked surfaces, and, like his famous terrorist paintings, they are about male aggression. Through Feb. 15. (Baer, 476 Broome St.)

Chris Macdonald—Large mechanical toys made of hacked wood, with roughly carved joints. These appealing works have a seventies makeshift sensibility but fail to transcend it. Through Feb. 8. (Beitzel, 102 Prince St.)

Mario Merz—This major Arte Povera artist's charms are often elusive, but these mixed-media works from the early and middle eighties are quite accessible. In one painting, several bison are cut off at the hooves, while in "The Giant Woodsmen" two loggers, balanced on conical logs, are represented by their feet only. Also on display is a canvas igloo with one section made of beeswax. All the works are decorated with rich, expressionistically applied colors. They evoke not so much the puffed-up machismo that was in full flower at Merz' Guggenheim Museum retrospective of two years ago as a more engaging and open-ended poetry of decay. Through Feb. 22. (Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St.)

Marcel Odenbach—Because of its emphasis on the marketplace, New York often misses out when it comes to certain noncommercial developments in art. This is especially the case with video art, and in particular with its European practitioners. Odenbach, a German, has attracted critical acclaim in Europe for more than a decade; however, the central piece in this exhibition, his first one in New York, is somewhat trite. On one side of the room is a single monitor showing a German terrorist breaking down on television. Facing this is a cluster of monitors all showing the same thing—a ferocious German shepherd overlaid with footage of such historical events as the Bolshevik Revolution, the Intifada, and the Vietnam War. Through Feb. 1. (Shainman, 560 Broadway.)

Kay Rosen—Paintings of earnest wordplay that's clever, but not quite clever enough. The pieces could benefit from being a little more twisted. Through Feb. 8. (Feature, 484 Broome St.)

Allan Wexler—There is a tortured kind of wackiness to this artist's furniture designs, which include a table and chairs planted on plots of grass and a tablecloth with four shirts sewn into it. Through Feb. 8. (Feldman, 31 Mercer St.)

Short List—**peter agostini,** Clasen, 470 Broome St. (through Feb. 29); **karl benjamin,** Snyder, 588 Broadway (through Feb. 15); **james lee byars,** Baghoomian, 555 Broadway (through Feb. 1); **sonia delaunay** and **michael boyd,** Zarre, 154 Wooster St. (through Feb. 29); **robert harms,** Perry, 472 Broome St. (through Feb. 22); **susan hiller,** Hearn, 39 Wooster St. (through Feb. 8); **richard long** and **james turrell,** SteinGladstone, 99 Wooster St. (through March 14); **christopher lucas,** Good, 532 Broadway (through Feb. 22); **claire moore,** Kelly, 591 Broadway (through Feb. 4); **barnett newman,** Gagosian, 136 Wooster St. (starts Jan. 29); **jean-pierre raynaud,** Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway (through Feb. 8); **faith ringgold,** Steinbaum, 132 Greene St. (through Feb. 18); **allen ruppersberg,** Burgin, 130 Prince St. (through Feb. 15); **robert wilson,** Cooper, 149 Wooster St. (through Feb. 29).

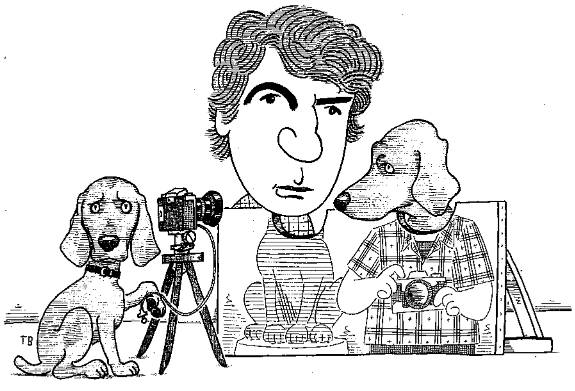
OTHER GALLERIES

Short List—**dennis oppenheim,** P.S. 1, 46-01 21st St., Long Island City (opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays; through Feb. 9); **arthur rackham,** Butler Library, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. (open Mondays through Fridays, 9 to 4:45; through Feb. 19).

MYTHOLOGIES

At eighteen, while travelling by train to Mexico, Langston Hughes was inspired by a view of the Mississippi to write his acclaimed poem "The Negro Speaks of Rivers." Now, twenty-five years after the poet's death, some of its lustrous verses compose his epitaph at his new Harlem grave site. Under the lobby floor at the Langston Hughes Auditorium—opened last April as an addition to the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture (515 Lenox Avenue, at 135th Street)—the major portion of Hughes's ashes is buried, in a book-shaped urn. The terrazzo-and-brass lobby floor, which is titled "Rivers," was designed by sculptor Houston Conwill; his sister, the poet Estella Conwill Majozo; and architect Joseph De Pace to commemorate Hughes's life as the bard of black America.

At the center of the floor is a cosmological diagram, patterned after African ceremonial ground markings, which reflects Hughes's spiritual embrace of many cultures and of the history of the African diaspora. Concentric circles in blue and earth-colored terrazzo are inlaid with a constellation of brass ideograms culled from Yoruban, Haitian voodoo, Christian, and other mythologies. The names of the rivers invoked in Hughes's poem—the Euphrates, the Nile, the Congo, and the Mississippi, all of which are associated with African migration—are also embedded in brass, their serpentine blue wanderings traced from the heart of the diagram to the edges of the room. "In a symbolic form, water is always present in our work," Conwill says. "Throughout African-American culture, water symbolizes freedom, justice, and power." Lines from the poem spiral through this map of Hughes's imaginative universe and converge on the central image, a brass fish. The figure of the fish, signifying transformation, marks the spot where Hughes's ashes lie. Its body is etched with the poem's hushed and contented closing: "My soul has grown deep like the rivers."



William Wegman

PHOTOGRAPHY

Edouard Boubat's show at the Witkin gallery (415 West Broadway; through February 29) makes us want to see a major exhibition of work by this underappreciated photographer, who has been taking pictures for the past fifty years or so. The Witkin exhibition includes photographs taken between the fifties and the present, in France, Belgium, Portugal, Spain, and North America. There's a touching modesty to Boubat's work, and a strong sense of atmosphere. Four of our favorite pictures in the show all articulate the texture of beautiful long hair, with a sense of tactility and intimacy that we have not experienced before in similar photographs. Boubat's best work doesn't try to impress the viewer with big statements, and his unassuming observations catch bits and pieces of life in convincing ways. Two window views taken in Paris, one through a lace curtain, the other of condensation blurring the view, have a graceful sense of place. And another photograph, which shows a boy (identified as Bernard) in a sailor suit, captures how moving a small child's desire to please can be. Bernard's not the thinnest kid around, and as he stands there prissed up and tucked in you feel not only his nerves before the camera, but also his earnest bravery.

"The Legacy of W. Eugene Smith"—Sixty vintage prints by Smith and fifteen works each by past recipients of the W. Eugene Smith Grant in Humanistic Photography. Through Feb. 16. (International Center of Photography Midtown, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St. Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

"Picturing Africa: Photographs of the Zulu, 1870-1900"—An exhibition of recent additions to the Metropolitan Museum's Department of the Arts of Africa, Oceania, and the Americas, installed in the hard-to-find Photograph Study Collection. The show is strong not because the photography is particularly exceptional but because of what the images show. Although these pictures of Zulu people and their dwellings, which were made by a number of different European photographers, were taken with ethnographic purposes in mind, we were struck by the spirit, strength, and beauty that also come through in them. It would be wonderful if this show were a more public event. (Visitors need to stop by the information desk for a pass and directions. The Collection is open Tuesdays through Fridays, from 10 to 4:30.) Through Feb. 28.

Short List—**edouard denis baldus** and **suzanne opton,** Lowinsky, 575 Broadway (through March 28); **ilse bing,** Houk Friedman, 1094 Madison Ave., at 82nd St. (through Feb. 29); **yann charbonnier,** Cadé, 1045 Madison Ave., at 79th St. (through Feb. 29); **lynn cohen,** P.P.O.W, 532 Broadway (through Feb. 8); **jed devine,** Lieberman & Saul, 155 Spring St. (through Feb. 8); **carl goldhagen,** Esman, 575 Broadway (through Feb. 8); **kenro izu,** Greenberg, 120 Wooster St. (through Feb. 29); **mc dermott & mc gough,** Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. (through Feb. 1); **sheila metzner,** Danziger, 415 West Broadway (through Feb. 8) and International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. (open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8; through Feb. 2); **gerard traquandi** and **eugène atget,** Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through Feb. 15); **ulay,** Baghoomian, 555 Broadway (through Feb. 1); **carl van vechten,** Manhattan East Gallery, 202 E. 76th St. (through Feb. 1).

MUSIC

AN opera we never thought we'd hear revived is François-Adrien Boieldieu's "La Dame Blanche," a sentimental favorite in France for about a century after its 1825 Paris première. It was steadily exported to Germany and intermittently performed in English-speaking countries during that same period. But as far as the Opera Orchestra of New York—which is about to open its 1992 season with the piece—is aware, nobody has tried it in New York (not, at least, with a full orchestra) since 1904. What we know of it—a jaunty tenor aria about the pleasures of being a soldier; a wistful tenor aria with horn obbligato and the oddity of a virtuoso finish in 5/4 time; a dreamy tenor aria that the old French record catalogues called "Rêverie de Georges Brown"; and a pretty tenor-soprano duet—suggests that it is a vehicle for a tenor who can revive the sweet, dashing style that made French tenors the original objects of the term "matinée idol." We find ourself wondering just how many people would be interested even if such a revival were achieved, but the excerpts are tasty, so it will be fun to find out whether the rest of the opera is up to them, and whether the tenor whom the Opera Orchestra has found (we haven't heard of him) has a surprise up his sleeve.

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 362-6000; for Avery Fisher Hall, 875-5030; for Alice Tully Hall, 875-5050; for Carnegie Hall, 247-7800; and for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—FIDELIO, with Hildegard Behrens, Sylvia McNair, Reiner Goldberg, and Matti Salminen; conducted by Christof Perick. (Jan. 27, Jan. 31, and Feb. 3, all at 8.) . . . TURANDOT, with Gwyneth Jones, Teresa Stratas, and Vladimir Popov; Nello Santi. (Jan. 28 and Feb. 5 at 8, and Feb. 1 at 1:30.) . . . DER FLIEGENDE HOLLÄNDER, with Janis Martin, Gary Lakes, James Morris, and Matti Salminen; James Conlon. (Jan. 29 and Feb. 4 at 8, and Feb. 1 at 8:30.) . . . L'ELISIR D'AMORE, with Maria Spacagna, Stanford Olsen, Mark Oswald, and Renato Capecchi; Robert Duerr. (Jan. 30 at 8.) (Metropolitan Opera House.)

Opera Orchestra of New York—Eve Queler directs a concert performance of Boieldieu's "La Dame Blanche." The soloists include soprano Renée Fleming and tenor Robert Swensen (who, we are told, will need to negotiate no fewer than forty-five high C's in the course of the evening). (Carnegie Hall. Jan. 30 at 8.)

New York City Opera National Company—The promising young casts and standard-repertoire productions of City Opera's touring division are rarely encountered within the five boroughs. This year, New Yorkers get a chance to catch the company's "Tosca," fully staged, with soprano Nina Warren, tenor Antonio Adame, and baritone Kenneth Shaw. Joseph Colaneri conducts. (Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts, Whitman Hall, Brooklyn College, near the intersection of Flatbush and Nostrand Avenues. 1-718 434-1900. Feb. 1 at 8.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—At Avery Fisher Hall. Jan. 28 at 7:30: Charles Dutoit conducts Mozart's Symphony No. 17, Debussy's "Prélude à l'Après-midi d'un Faune," de Falla's "Three-Cornered Hat," and Szymanowski's Second Violin Concerto (featuring Chantal Juillet). . . . ¶ Jan. 30 and Feb. 1 at 8, and Jan. 31 at 11 A.M.: Charles Dutoit conducts Roussel's "Festin de l'Araignée" Suite, Nielsen's Symphony No. 5, and Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 4 (featuring Radu Lupu). . . . ¶ Feb. 5 at 8: Andrew Davis conducts the "Sea Interludes" from Britten's "Peter Grimes," Elgar's First Symphony, and Mozart's Bassoon Concerto (featuring the orchestra's principal bassoonist, Judith LeClair). . . . NOTE: In a pre-concert recital, beginning at 7 and open to ticketholders, members of the orchestra will perform Mozart's C-Major Piano Trio, K. 548.

"Mozart Masses in Concert"—At Alice Tully Hall. The Michigan State University School of Music Chamber Orchestra and Chorale include in their program Mozart's "Credo" Mass (K. 257) and Symphony No. 39. (Jan. 27 at 8.) . . . ¶ The University of Colorado at Boulder Chamber Orchestra and Singers perform Mozart's "Piccolomini" Mass (K. 258) and Symphony No. 35 (the "Haffner"), among other works. (Feb. 1 at 8.)

Orchestra of the Old Fairfield Academy—Thomas Crawford conducts the period-instrument ensemble in symphonies by two Haydns (No. 66 and No. 80 by Franz Joseph, and another by his brother Michael), a Sinfonia Concertante by Johann Christian Bach (featuring violinist Linda Quan and cellist Myron Lutzke), and Beethoven's Romance in F (with Ms. Quan as the soloist). (Church of St. Mary the Virgin, 145 W. 46th St. 921-2939. Jan. 28 at 8.)

Philharmonia Virtuosi—Richard Kapp conducts works by J. C. Bach, Michael Haydn, Villa-Lobos (his "Choros No. 7"), and Franz Joseph Haydn (his D-Major Cello Concerto, featuring Carter Brey). (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Feb. 1 at 7.)

Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra—Zdenek Macal conducts the second suite from Roussel's "Bacchus et Ariane," Dvořák's Eighth Symphony, and the New York première of Gunther Schuller's Violin Concerto No. 2 (featuring Young Uck Kim). (Carnegie Hall. Feb. 1 at 8.)

Concerto Soloists of Philadelphia—Marc Mostovoy conducts the chamber orchestra in music by Vivaldi, J. C. F. Bach, Schubert, and Janáček; Cynthia Raim is featured as the soloist in Mozart's Piano Concerto in B-Flat (K. 595). (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. Feb. 2 at 2. For information about tickets, call 586-4680.)

Philharmonia Hungarica—Yehudi Menuhin conducts the orchestra in Haydn's Symphony No. 83 ("La Poule"), Bartók's "Concerto for Orchestra," and Poulenc's Concerto for Two Pianos (featuring the duo-piano team of Ralph Markham and Kenneth Broadway). (Avery Fisher Hall. Feb. 2 at 3.)

Orchestra of St. Luke's—Roger Norrington conducts the orchestra and the Düsseldorf Concert Chorus in works by Mendelssohn: his complete incidental music to "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and his cantata "Die Erste Walpurgisnacht" (Op. 60). The evening's soloists are soprano Jeanne Ommerlé, mezzo-soprano Mary Westbrook-Geha, tenor Frank Kelley, and baritone Andreas Schmidt; Barbara Feldon and Fritz Weaver recite the poetical portions. (Avery Fisher Hall. Feb. 2 at 7:30.)

Choros Aristos—Gregory Buchalter directs Rossini's "Petite Messe Solennelle," featuring soprano Kaaren Erickson, mezzo-soprano Wendy Hoffman, tenor Michael Forest, and bass-baritone James Courtney. Described by its composer as "the final sin of my old age," the Mass is none too "solennelle," and is "petite" mainly in its accompanying ensemble, which, comprising nothing but two pianos and a harmonium, was modest enough to squeeze inside a Parisian town house for the piece's unveiling, in 1864. (Merkin Concert Hall. Feb. 2 at 8.)

Jupiter Symphony—Though the Romanian pianist Dinu Lipatti died in 1950 (at the age of thirty-three), his reputation for pianism of fastidious delicacy lives on through his recordings. But many listeners may be unaware that Lipatti was also a capable composer; following studies with Dukas and Nadia Boulanger, he produced a modest catalogue of works, nearly all of which involved the piano. Jens Nygaard conducts Lipatti's "Concertino in Classic Style for Piano and String Orchestra" (one of his earliest pieces, composed in 1936), with Seymour Lipkin as the soloist. Also on the program are orchestral works by Bach and Haydn (his Symphony No. 52), and Schubert's "Grand Rondo" in A Major (for piano, four hands, played by Messrs. Lipkin and Nygaard). (Alice Tully Hall. Feb. 3 at 8.)

State Symphonic Kapelle of Moscow—At Carnegie Hall, Gennady Rozhdestvensky conducting the orchestra, which relinquished its former name of "Soviet Philharmonic" several weeks ago. Feb. 3 at 8: Rimsky-Korsakov's "Russian Easter Overture," Tchaikovsky's Suite No. 3, and Rachmaninoff's Third Piano Concerto (featuring pianist Viktoria Postnikova, who is the conductor's wife). . . . ¶ Feb. 4 at 8: Ives' "Robert Browning Overture," Saint-Saëns' Symphony No. 1, and Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto (featuring violinist Alexander Rozhdestvensky, who is the conductor's son).

Musica Sacra—Richard Westenburg directs music by Brahms (including the "Liebeslieder Waltzes," Op. 52), as well as recent pieces by Anthony Davis and Peter Schickele (his "Go For Broke: A Comedy for Chorus," which relates the tale of a lottery winner). (Alice Tully Hall. Feb. 5 at 8.)

Yehudi Menuhin, conducting the Philharmonia Hungarica

New York Bach Ensemble—Kent Tritle directs two solo cantatas by Bach (No. 35, featuring contralto Karen Krueger, and No. 82, featuring baritone Paul Rowe), and doubles as soloist in a Handel organ concerto. (Church of St. Ignatius Loyola, Park Ave. at 84th St. 439-8044. Feb. 5 at 8.)

Boston Symphony—With Seiji Ozawa on the podium and Mahler's Sixth Symphony on the music stands. (Carnegie Hall. Feb. 5-6 at 8.)

RECITALS

Focus! 1992—A series featuring music composed in the United States during the most recent decade. Jan. 28 at 7: A composers' roundtable, with Margaret Brouwer, David Lang, Tania León, John Musto, and Paul Schoenfield. (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St.) . . . ¶ Jan. 28 at 8: Music by Messrs. Lang and Musto, Ms. León, Ursula Mamlok, Muhal Richard Abrams, and David Diamond. Also on the program is a performance by the Juilliard Dancers of works choreographed by Laura Dean to music by Steve Reich. (Juilliard Theatre.) . . . ¶ Jan. 29 at 8: A salute to John Cage, including three of his own compositions in addition to pieces by Morton Feldman, Pia Gilbert, Philip Corner, and Lou Harrison. (Juilliard Theatre.) . . . ¶ Jan. 30 at 8: Music by Bright Sheng, Richard Hervig, Larry Widdoes, Anthony Davis, and Milton Babbitt; also, works using electronic instruments, by Mario Davidovsky, Joan LaBarbara, Morton Subotnick, and C. Bryan Rulon. (Juilliard Theatre.) . . . ¶ Jan. 31 at 8: Christopher Kendall conducts the Juilliard Symphony in the première of Margaret Brouwer's "Third from the Sun," John Adams' "The Wound Dresser" (featuring baritone Martin Bruns), and Paul Schoenfield's "Four Parables for Piano and Orchestra" (with pianist Stephen Gosling). (Alice Tully Hall.) (For information about free tickets, which are required for all events, call 769-7406.)

North/South Consonance—Max Lifchitz conducts the ensemble in a work of his own as well as in pieces by George Belden, Richard Nanes, and Aurelio de la Vega; with soprano

MUSIC–Cont'd

Eva de la O. (Merkin Concert Hall. Jan. 28 at 8.)

"Schubertiade"—At the 92nd Street Y. This year's installment of the Y's exhaustive exploration of Schubert's life and works. Jan. 28 at 8: A recital of chamber music in which the composer employed themes that had previously appeared in his lieder: the "Variations on 'Trockne Blumen' " (for flute and piano); the C-Major Fantasy (for violin and piano); the "Wanderer" Fantasy (for piano); and a movement from the "Death and the Maiden" String Quartet. Baritone Hermann Prey and pianist Joseph Kalichstein perform the originals; the reworkings are entrusted to flutist Paula Robison, violinist György Pauk, pianist Sergei Edelmann (as well as Mr. Kalichstein), and the Tokyo String Quartet. . . . ¶ Feb. 1 at 8: Following his performance (with Mr. Prey) of five lieder by Schubert, pianist Jeffrey Swann offers each of the songs again, as transcribed for his instrument by Franz Liszt. In addition, he plays a handful of Schubert's dances and four of Liszt's "Soirées de Vienne.". . . ¶ Feb. 2, from *1 to 9 (with a dinner break between roughly* 6 and 7): A symposium on modern corrections and re-interpretations of the myths that have arisen around the life of Schubert. The day will include talks by Leon Botstein, Ernst Hilmar, Joseph Horowitz, and Susan McClary; clips from "The Melody Master" (Hollywood's 1941 contribution to Schubertian fiction); and live performances (featuring Mr. Prey) of excerpts from Heinrich Berté's 1916 operetta "Das Dreimäderlhaus," ostensibly based on Schubert's life. (Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440.)

Emerson String Quartet—To inaugurate a recently renovated performance space at St. Clement's Church, the ensemble plays Mozart's Divertimento, K. 563, and Dvořák's Quartet, Op. 106. A benefit concert. (423 W. 46th St. Jan. 29 at 7:30. For information about tickets, call 505-8345.)

Tokyo String Quartet—Performing music by Mozart: three string quartets (K. 156, K. 387, and K. 458) and the Piano Quartet in E-Flat (with André Previn). (Alice Tully Hall. Jan. 29 at 8.)

Billy Strayhorn

New Music Consort—Presenting works by Carter, Davidovsky, Xenakis, Lydia Ayers, and Arthur Weisberg. (Manhattan School of Music, Broadway at 122nd St. Jan. 29 at 8. For information about tickets, call 362-0962.)

"Mozart on Period Instruments"—The historical-performance movement has so far been only modestly represented in Lincoln Center's Mozart Bicentennial celebrations. In the first installment of a four-concert series addressing this gap, fortepianists Malcolm Bilson, Steven Lubin, and Melvyn Tan (along with other period-instrument players) will perform solo, chamber, and concertante works by the composer, including his Concerto for Three Pianos (K. 242). (Alice Tully Hall. Jan. 30 at 8.)

Raphael Trio—Performing trios by Brahms, Ravel, David Liptak, and Rainer Bischof. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. Jan. 30 at 8.)

Claudia Dumschat—Organist, performing works by Nicolas de Grigny, Georg Böhm, Bach, Vierne, and Charles Tournemire (his improvisation on "Victimae Paschali," as transcribed by Maurice Duruflé). (Church of the Ascension, Fifth Ave. at 10th St. Jan. 30 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Jane Komarov—An evening of her vocal and instrumental compositions, including a première. (Greenwich House Music School, 46 Barrow St. 242-4770. Jan. 30 at 8.)

Neil Rosenshein—The tenor includes in his recital Vaughan Williams' "Songs of Travel" and works by eight American composers (from Stephen Foster to John Musto). Pianist Dan Saunders assists. (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. Jan. 31 at 8.)

Yale Chamber Music Series—A chamber ensemble presents all three of Brahms' piano quartets. (Merkin Concert Hall. Feb. 1 at 8.)

New York Philharmonic Ensembles—Members of the orchestra perform a woodwind quartet by Rossini, Kodály's Serenade for Two Violins and Viola, and Shostakovich's G-Minor Piano Quintet. (Merkin Concert Hall. Feb. 2 at 3.)

David Buechner and Richard Locker—The pianist and the cellist perform the first of two concerts in which they will present all of Beethoven's cello-and-piano music. (Ethical Culture Society, 2 W. 64th St. Feb. 2 at 3. No tickets necessary.)

Christopher Parkening—Classical guitarist, performing music by Albéniz, de Falla, Villa-Lobos, and others. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Feb. 2 at 8.)

Jean-Pierre Rampal—The flutist celebrates his seventieth birthday by playing chamber music with some friends: violinist Isaac Stern, cellist Mstislav Rostropovich, and his long-*time accompanist John Steele Ritter.* The program includes trios by Haydn, Mozart, François Devienne, and Weber, as well as assorted other works by Handel, Telemann, and Antonín Reicha. (Avery Fisher Hall. Feb. 3 at 8.)

Juilliard String Quartet—Performing Bach's "The Art of Fugue," assisted by violist Samuel Rhodes (who will play a viola adapted for the occasion to extend its range downward, enabling the player to render Bach's lines at the notated pitch, without troublesome octave transpositions). (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. Feb. 3 at 8. For information about free tickets, which are necessary, call 769-7406.). . . ¶ The ensemble performs quartets by Shostakovich (his thirteenth) and Milhaud (his seventeenth); cellist Bernard Greenhouse joins the foursome for Schubert's supernal C-Major String Quintet. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. Feb. 5 at 8.)

Speculum Musicae—The chamber musicians perform works for string quartet by Ruth Crawford Seeger (her "String Quartet 1931") and Steven Mackey (his "On All Fours"), as well as Donald Martino's Quartet for Clarinet and String Trio and Elliott Carter's "Con Leggerezza Pensosa" (a trio for clarinet, violin, and cello, completed in 1990). (Merkin Concert Hall. Feb. 4 at 8.)

Kathleen Supové—The pianist continues her series of "Exploding Piano" concerts, which explore extended, nontraditional musical possibilities afforded by the instrument. This installment features music by Louis Andriessen, Peter Schat, Giacinto Scelsi, Andy Vores, and Rob Zuidam. (Weill Recital Hall. Feb. 5 at 8.)

Gregory Haimovsky—Pianist, performing music by Haydn, Chopin, and Debussy (Book Two of his Preludes), as well as U.S. premières of compositions by Mark Kopytman and Sergei Slonimsky (with two additional pianists from the N. Y. U. Chamber Music Society assisting in the latter). (Merkin Concert Hall. Feb. 5 at 8.)

JAZZ/POP/ROCK
PERSONAL APPEARANCES

Liza Minnelli—Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 247-4777. Jan. 28-Feb. 1 at 8.

Rod Stewart—Madison Square Garden. 465-6000. Jan. 27-28 at 8.

Andes Manta—Washington Square Church, 135 W. 4th St. Jan. 31 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.

Odadaa!—The Ghanian dance-and-drumming troupe. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Feb. 1 at 8.)

Music by Billy Strayhorn—Performed by the Michael Hashim quartet, under the auspices of the Duke Ellington Society. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Feb. 2 at 7:30. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Bill McClelland and the Feetwarmers—With the Vassar College Madrigal Singers. (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Feb. 3 at 8.)

SPORTS

HOME TEAMS

Rangers—Vs. the Pittsburgh Penguins, Feb. 5 at 7:30.

Islanders—Vs. the Philadelphia Flyers, Feb. 1. . . . ¶ Vs. the Calgary Flames, Feb. 2. (Game time, 5:05.)

Devils—Vs. the Philadelphia Flyers, Feb. 4 at 7:35.

Knicks—Vs. the Washington Bullets, Jan. 29 at 7:30. . . . ¶ Vs. the Golden State Warriors, Feb. 2 at 1. . . . ¶ Vs. the Miami Heat, Feb. 4 at 7:30.

Nets—Vs. the Seattle Supersonics, Feb. 5 at 7:35.

(The Knicks and the Rangers play at Madison Square Garden, 465-6000; the Islanders at the Nassau Coliseum, 1-516 794-9300; and the Devils and the Nets at the Meadowlands Arena, 1-201 935-3900.)

RACING

Horses—At Aqueduct: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 12:30. . . . **trotting** at Yonkers Raceway: Weeknights at 8 and Tuesdays at 1. . . . At the Meadowlands: Week nights at 7:30.

The Olympics—The XVIth installment of the Winter Games, Feb. 8-23. Where's CBS's $243 million hype? Albertville? (*All-bear-veee?*) Some facts: A small industrial town on the Arly river; 100 kilometres from Grenoble ('68); proximity to Summer sister Barcelona makes for closest pair since Helsinki and Oslo ('52). Estimates for U.S.A. medals are higher than Calgary's five but lower than Lake Placid's twelve (the biggest haul, equalling Lake Placid '32). Pray for speed skater Dan Jansen, who fell twice last time, on the heels of a family tragedy; for Midori Ito, who briefly flew above her figure-skating competitors but did not place; and for eighteen-year-old first-time luger Robert Pipkins, a Staten Island native, who competes with a potentially unhealthy no-holds-barred attitude.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Fish Tanks—Four-eyed butterfly fish, royal gammas, and three-striped damselfish will be on view at the World Financial Center, starting Jan. 29, as part of its "Environmental Festival." There will be ten fish tanks in all, which will display more than twenty varieties of sea critters. Open Mondays through Fridays, 11 to 7, and Saturdays and Sundays, noon to 5. Through March 31.

"Urban Scapes"—A two-part event that explores the way city kids look at culture. Jan. 31, from 6 to 9; Feb. 1, from noon to 6; and Feb. 2, from 2 to 4: More than twenty-five films by various directors will be shown, on such subjects as drugs, AIDS, and homelessness, as well as music, street art, and coming of age. . . . ¶ Feb. 1 at 7:30: Hip-hop groups Get Set and Latin Empire will perform and Quincy Troupe, Nicole Breedlove, and Malkia Cyril will read from their own poetry. (Davis Hall, City College, Convent Ave. at 134th St. 650-7100.)

Readings and Talks—Feb. 3 at 8: David Grossman reads, in English and in Hebrew, from his own fiction. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440.). . . ¶ Feb. 4 at 7: Robert Fagles reads from his new translation of The Iliad. (Nicholas Roerich Museum, 319 W. 107th St. No tickets necessary.). . . ¶ Feb. 4 at 8: N. John Hall talks about his new book, a biography of Trollope. (Endicott Booksellers, 450 Columbus Ave., at 81st St. No tickets necessary.). . . ¶ Feb. 5 at 6:30: Joseph Wiseman, Cynthia Harris, Linda Hunt, and Pearl Lang read stories by Isaac Bashevis Singer. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400.)

Memorandum—Chinese New Year's Eve is Feb. 3. This is the Year of the Monkey.

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

EAST SIDE

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000)
Theatre 1: "Black Robe" (directed by Bruce Beresford), with Lothaire Bluteau.
Theatre 2: "Love Crimes" (Lizzie Borden), with Sean Young and Patrick Bergin.
Theatre 3: Through Feb. 4: "Prospero's Books" (Peter Greenaway), with John Gielgud. From Feb. 5: "Mississippi Masala" (Mira Nair), with Denzel Washington and Sarita Choudhury.
Theatre 4: "My Own Private Idaho" (†).
Theatre 5: "Until the End of the World" (Wim Wenders), with William Hurt.
Theatre 6: "Madame Bovary" (†).

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)
"The Golden Coach" (1953, Jean Renoir), with Anna Magnani; and "Life on a String" (Chen Kaige; in Chinese).

Newman Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)
"Rocco and His Brothers" (†).

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Freejack" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Fisher King" (†).
Theatre 3: "Naked Lunch" (David Cronenberg), with Peter Weller, Judy Davis, Ian Holm, and Julian Sands.

Loews Village Theatre VII, 3rd Ave. at 11th. (982-0400)
Theatre 1: "JFK" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Prince of Tides" (†).
Theatre 3: Through Jan. 30: "High Heels" (Pedro Almodóvar, in Spanish). From Jan. 31: "Alan & Naomi" (Sterling VanWagenen), with Lukas Haas and Michael Gross.
Theatre 4: "The Prince of Tides" (†).
Theatre 5: "Bugsy" (†).
Theatre 6: "Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country" (Nicholas Meyer), with William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy, and DeForest Kelley.
Theatre 7: "JFK" (†).

Cinema Village 12th Street, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through Jan. 30: "Strangers in Good Company" (Cynthia Scott).
From Jan. 31: "The Lunatic" (Lol Creme).

Village East Cinemas, 2nd Ave. at 12th. (529-6799)
Theatre 1: "The Hand That Rocks the Cradle" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Inner Circle" (Andrei Konchalovsky), with Tom Hulce, Lolita Davidovich, and Bob Hoskins.
Theatre 3: Through Jan. 28: "Antonia and Jane" (Beeban Kidron). From Jan. 29: "Daughters of the Dust" (Julie Dash).
Theatre 4: "Rush" (†).
Theatre 5: "Father of the Bride" (†).
Theatre 6: "Beauty and the Beast" (†).
Theatre 7: "Paris Is Burning" (Jennie Livingston), a documentary; and "Young Soul Rebels" (Isaac Julien).

Cinema Village 3rd Avenue, between 12th and 13th. (505-7320)
"The Silence of the Lambs" (Jonathan Demme), with Jodie Foster and Anthony Hopkins; and "The Vanishing" (George Sluizer, in Dutch and French).

Loews 19th Street East 6, B'way at 19th. (260-8000)
Theatre 1: "Hook" (†).
Theatre 2: "Juice" (Ernest R. Dickerson), with Omar Epps.
Theatre 3: Through Jan. 30: "Meeting Venus" (István Szabó), with Glenn Close and Niels Arestrup. From Jan. 31: "Hard Promises" (Martin Davidson), with Sissy Spacek and William Petersen.
Theatre 4: "Freejack" (†).
Theatre 5: "The Addams Family" (Barry Sonnenfeld), with Anjelica Huston, Raul Julia, and Christopher Lloyd.
Theatre 6: "Love Crimes" (Lizzie Borden), with Sean Young and Patrick Bergin.

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"Father of the Bride" (†).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"At Play in the Fields of the Lord" (†).

Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th. (689-5548)
Theatre 1: "The Hand That Rocks the Cradle" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Jan. 30: "The Hand That Rocks the Cradle" (†). From Jan. 31: "Alan & Naomi" (Sterling VanWagenen), with Lukas Haas and Michael Gross.

THE MOVIE HOUSES

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	27	28	29	30	31	1
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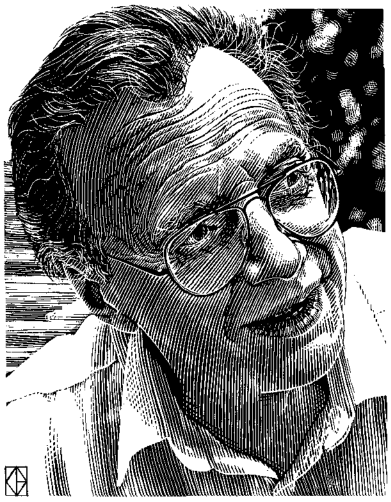
FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 17.



At the Museum of Television and Radio, a Dennis Potter retrospective

Theatre 3: "The Inner Circle" (Andrei Konchalovsky), with Tom Hulce, Lolita Davidovich, and Bob Hoskins.
Theatre 4: "Bugsy" (†).

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "JFK" (†).
Theatre 2: "Juice" (Ernest R. Dickerson), with Omar Epps.
Theatre 3: "Freejack" (†).

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"The Prince of Tides" (†).

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"The Fisher King" (†).

Sutton 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Theatre 1: "Father of the Bride" (†).
Theatre 2: "Love Crimes" (Lizzie Borden), with Sean Young and Patrick Bergin.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Grand Canyon" (Lawrence Kasdan), with Kevin Kline.

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
Through Jan. 30: "Black Robe" (Bruce Beresford), with Lothaire Bluteau.
From Jan. 31: "Alan & Naomi" (Sterling VanWagenen), with Lukas Haas and Michael Gross.

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "Juice" (Ernest R. Dickerson), with Omar Epps.
Theatre 2: "Juice."

59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Boyz N the Hood" (John Singleton).

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Fried Green Tomatoes" (Jon Avnet), with Kathy Bates, Jessica Tandy, Mary-Louise Parker, and Mary Stuart Masterson.
Theatre 2: Through Jan. 30: "Hook" (†). From Jan. 31: "Shining Through" (David Seltzer), with Michael Douglas and Melanie Griffith.

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
Theatre 1: "The Hand That Rocks the Cradle" (†).
Theatre 2: "Rush" (†).
Theatre 3: "Beauty and the Beast" (†).

First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd. (752-4600)
Theatre 1: Through Jan. 30: "My Girl" (Howard Zieff), with Dan Aykroyd, Jamie Lee Curtis, Macaulay Culkin, and Anna Chlumsky. From Jan. 31: "Hard Promises" (Martin Davidson), with Sissy Spacek and William Petersen.
Theatre 2: "Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country" (Nicholas Meyer), with William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy, and DeForest Kelley.
Theatre 3: "For the Boys" (†).
Theatre 4: "Kuffs" (Bruce A. Evans), with Christian Slater, Tony Goldwyn, and Milla Jovovich.
Theatre 5: "Naked Lunch" (David Cronenberg), with Peter Weller, Judy Davis, Ian Holm, and Julian Sands.
Theatre 6: "Cape Fear" (†).

Gemini 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Bugsy" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Last Boy Scout" (Tony Scott), with Bruce Willis and Damon Wayans.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"At Play in the Fields of the Lord" (†).

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "Freejack" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Prince of Tides" (†).

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"Hear My Song" (Peter Chelsom), with Ned Beatty, Adrian Dunbar, and Tara Fitzgerald.

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"JFK" (†).

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Juice" (Ernest R. Dickerson), with Omar Epps.

Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)
Theatre 1: "Cape Fear" (†).
Theatre 2: "Kuffs" (Bruce A. Evans), with Christian Slater, Tony Goldwyn, and Milla Jovovich.

Loews Orpheum VII, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (876-2400)
Theatre 1: "The Prince of Tides" (†).
Theatre 2: "Freejack" (†).
Theatre 3: "Hook" (†).
Theatre 4: "Bugsy" (†).
Theatre 5: Through Jan. 30: "The Prince of Tides" (†). From Jan. 31: "Alan & Naomi" (Sterling VanWagenen), with Lukas Haas and Michael Gross.
Theatre 6: Through Jan. 30: "The Addams Family" (Barry Sonnenfeld), with Anjelica Huston, Raul Julia, and Christopher Lloyd. From Jan. 31: "Hard Promises" (Martin Davidson), with Sissy Spacek and William Petersen.
Theatre 7: "Love Crimes" (Lizzie Borden), with Sean Young and Patrick Bergin.

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: "Father of the Bride" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Hand That Rocks the Cradle" (†).

WEST SIDE

Film Forum, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
Theatre 1: Through Jan. 28: "Daughters of the Dust" (directed by Julie Dash). From Jan. 29: "Thank You and Goodnight!" (1990, Jan Oxenberg).
Theatre 2: See listings under Revival Houses.
Theatre 3: "35 Up" (Michael Apted), a documentary.

Waverly 1 and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: Through Jan. 30: "Kuffs" (Bruce A. Evans), with Christian Slater. From Jan. 31: "Shining Through" (David Seltzer), with Michael Douglas and Melanie Griffith.
Theatre 2: "Juice" (Ernest R. Dickerson), with Omar Epps.

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: Through Jan. 30: "Cape Fear" (†). From Jan. 31: "Hard Promises" (Martin Davidson), with Sissy Spacek and William Petersen.
Theatre 2: "Grand Canyon" (Lawrence Kasdan), with Kevin Kline.

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Hearts of Darkness: A Filmmaker's Apocalypse" (Fax Bahr and George Hickenlooper), a documentary about the making of "Apocalypse Now."
Theatre 2: "Europa Europa" (Agnieszka Holland, in German and Russian).
Theatre 3: "Life Is Sweet" (†).
Theatre 4: Through Jan. 30: "City of Hope" (John Sayles), with Vincent Spano, Tony Lo Bianco, Joe Morton, Barbara Williams, and Sayles. From Jan. 31: "Rhapsody in August" (†).

MOVIE HOUSES–Cont'd

Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)

Theatre 1: "Cape Fear" (†).

Theatre 2: "Grand Canyon" (Lawrence Kasdan), with Kevin Kline.

Theatre 3: "Fried Green Tomatoes" (Jon Avnet), with Kathy Bates, Jessica Tandy, Mary-Louise Parker, and Mary Stuart Masterson.

Theatre 4: Through Jan. 30: "Grand Canyon." From Jan. 31: "Shining Through" (David Seltzer), with Michael Douglas and Melanie Griffith.

Theatre 5: "JFK" (†).

Theatre 6: "Fried Green Tomatoes."

Theatre 7: "Bugsy" (†).

Theatre 8: "The Prince of Tides" (†).

Theatre 9: "The Hand That Rocks the Cradle" (†).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)

Theatre 1: "Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country" (Nicholas Meyer), with William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy, and DeForest Kelley.

Theatre 2: (Matinées only) "Beauty and the Beast" (†); and (evenings only) "Kuffs" (Bruce A. Evans), with Christian Slater.

Theatre 3: "Rush" (†).

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)

"Beauty and the Beast" (†).

Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)

Theatre 1: "In the Heat of Passion" (Rodman Flender), with Sally Kirkland.

Theatre 2: "My Own Private Idaho" (†).

Theatre 3: "The Fisher King" (†).

Theatre 4: "City of Hope" (John Sayles), with Vincent Spano, Tony Lo Bianco, Joe Morton, Barbara Williams, and Sayles.

Theatre 5: "The Black Robe" (Bruce Beresford), with Lothaire Bluteau.

Theatre 6: (Separate admissions) "My Girl" (Howard Zieff), with Dan Aykroyd, Jamie Lee Curtis, Macaulay Culkin, and Anna Chlumsky; and "Let Him Have It" (Peter Medak), with Tom Courtenay, Eileen Atkins, Clare Holman, Chris Eccleston, and Paul Reynolds.

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)

Through Jan. 30: "The Prince of Tides" (†).

From Jan. 31: "Shining Through" (David Seltzer), with Michael Douglas and Melanie Griffith.

Loews Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)

"The Inner Circle" (Andrei Konchalovsky), with Tom Hulce, Lolita Davidovich, and Bob Hoskins.

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)

"Naked Lunch" (David Cronenberg), with Peter Weller, Judy Davis, Ian Holm, and Julian Sands.

Carnegie Hall Cinemas, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)

Theatre 1: "Madame Bovary" (†).

Theatre 2: Through Feb. 4: "Life Is Sweet" (†). From Feb. 5: "Mississippi Masala" (Mira Nair), with Denzel Washington and Sarita Choudhury.

Loews Fine Arts, 4 W. 58th. (980-5656)

"Kafka" (Steven Soderbergh), with Jeremy Irons, Theresa Russell, Joel Grey, Alec Guinness, Armin Mueller-Stahl, Ian Holm, and Jeroen Krabbé.

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)

"Meeting Venus" (István Szabó), with Glenn Close and Niels Arestrup.

Loews Columbus Circle, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)

"JFK" (†).

62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466)

"Grand Canyon" (Lawrence Kasdan), with Kevin Kline.

Lincoln Plaza 1, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)

Theatre 1: Through Jan. 30: "Rhapsody in August" (†). From Jan. 31: "Voyager" (Volker Schlöndorff), with Sam Shepard and Julie Delpy.

Theatre 2: "High Heels" (Pedro Almodóvar, in Spanish).

Theatre 3: "The Double Life of Véronique" (Krzysztof Kieslowski, in French and Polish), with Irène Jacob and Philippe Volter.

Beacon, B'way at 74th. (496-7070)

Through Feb. 2: "At the Max" (Julien Temple), a concert film of the Rolling Stones.

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)

"The Prince of Tides" (†).

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)

Theatre 1: Through Jan. 30: "Love Crimes" (Lizzie Borden), with Sean Young and Patrick Bergin. From Jan. 31: "Hard Promises" (Martin Davidson), with Sissy Spacek and William Petersen.

Theatre 2: "Juice" (Ernest R. Dickerson), with Omar Epps.

Theatre 3: "The Hand That Rocks the Cradle" (†).

Theatre 4: "Freejack" (†).

Theatre 5: "Hook" (†).

Theatre 6: "Bugsy" (†).

Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)

Theatre 1: "Rush" (†).

Theatre 2: (Matinées only) "Beauty and the Beast" (†); and (evenings only) "Cape Fear" (†).

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)

Theatre 1: "Father of the Bride" (†).

Theatre 2: "The Last Boy Scout" (Tony Scott), with Bruce Willis and Damon Wayans.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)

Theatre 1: "Hook" (†).

Theatre 2: "Freejack" (†).

Theatre 3: "Bugsy" (†).

Theatre 4: "Rush" (†).

Theatre 5: "The Last Boy Scout" (directed by Tony Scott), with Bruce Willis and Damon Wayans.

Theatre 6: "Love Crimes" (Lizzie Borden), with Sean Young and Patrick Bergin.

Theatre 7: Through Jan. 30: "Love Crimes." From Jan. 31: "Into the Sun" (Fritz Kiersch), with Anthony Michael Hall and Michael Paré.

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)

"The Hand That Rocks the Cradle" (†).

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)

Theatre 1: Through Jan. 30: "Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country" (Nicholas Meyer), with William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy, and DeForest Kelley. From Jan. 31: "Hard Promises" (Martin Davidson), with Sissy Spacek and William Petersen.

Theatre 2: "Father of the Bride" (†).

Theatre 3: Through Jan. 30: "The Addams Family" (Barry Sonnenfeld), with Anjelica Huston, Raul Julia, and Christopher Lloyd. From Jan. 31: (Separate admissions) "The Addams Family" and "Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country."

Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)

"Juice" (Ernest R. Dickerson), with Omar Epps.

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)

Theatre 1: "Kuffs" (Bruce A. Evans), with Christian Slater.

Theatre 2: "Cape Fear" (†).

REVIVAL HOUSES

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515)

Through Jan. 28: "There's Nothing Out There" (directed by Rolfe Kanefsky).

From Jan. 29: "Guilty as Charged" (Sam Irvin), with Rod Steiger and Lauren Hutton.

Film Forum 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)

Through Jan. 28: "Battling Butler" (1926, Buster Keaton; silent), with Keaton; and "Speak Easily" (1932, Edward Sedgwick), with Keaton and Jimmy Durante.

Jan. 29: "San Diego, I Love You" (1944, Reginald Le Borg), with Jon Hall, Louise Allbritton, and Buster Keaton; and "In the Good Old Summer Time" (1949, Robert Z. Leonard), with Judy Garland, Van Johnson, S. Z. Sakall, Spring Byington, and Keaton.

Jan. 30-Feb. 2: "Spite Marriage" (1929, Edward Sedgwick; silent), with Buster Keaton, Dorothy Sebastian, Leila Hyams, and Hank Mann; and "The Saphead" (1920, Herbert Slanché; silent), with Keaton.

Feb. 3-4: Short Buster Keaton films from the thirties.

Feb. 5: "The Villain Still Pursued Her" (1940, Edward Cline), with Buster Keaton, Alan Mowbray, and Hugh Herbert; "Li'l Abner" (1940, Albert S. Rogell), with Granville Owen, Martha O'Driscoll, Mona Ray, Johnnie Morris, and Keaton; and "The Jones Family in Hollywood" (1939, Malcolm St. Clair), with Jed Prouty, Spring Byington, and William Tracy.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

Jan. 27: "Hiroshima, Mon Amour" (1959, Alain Resnais; in French), with Emmanuèle Riva and Eiji Okada; and "Muriel" (1963, Resnais; in French), with Delphine Seyrig.

Jan. 28: "Murder, My Sweet" (1945, Edward Dmytryk), with Claire Trevor and Dick Powell; and "The Brasher Doubloon" (1947, John Brahm), with George Montgomery.

Jan. 29: "Will Success Spoil Rock Hunter?" (1967, Frank Tashlin), with Jayne Mansfield, Tony Randall, and Betsy Drake; and "Lord Love a Duck" (1966, George Axelrod), with Tuesday Weld and Roddy McDowall.

Jan. 30: "How to Marry a Millionaire" (1953, Jean Negulesco), with Marilyn Monroe, Betty Grable, and Lauren Bacall; and "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" (1953, Howard Hawks), with Jane Russell, Monroe, and Charles Coburn.

Jan. 31-Feb. 1: "The Last Metro" (1981, François Truffaut; in French), with Catherine Deneuve, Gérard Depardieu, and Jean Poiret; and "Love on the Run" (1979, Truffaut; in French), with Jean-Pierre Léaud, Marie-France Pisier, and Claude Jade.

Feb. 2: "Follow the Fleet" (†); and "Carefree" (1938, Mark Sandrich), with Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire.

Feb. 3: "The Ritual" (1969, Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Ingrid Thulin, Anders Ek, and Gunnar Björnstrand; and "After the Rehearsal" (1984, Bergman; in Swedish), with Erland Josephson and Thulin.

Feb. 4: "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof" (1958, Richard Brooks), with Elizabeth Taylor, Paul Newman, Burl Ives, Judith Anderson, Madeleine Sherwood, and Jack Carson; and "Night of the Iguana" (†).

Feb. 5: "And Then There Were None" (1945, René Clair), with Barry Fitzgerald, Walter Huston, and Louis Hayward; and "The Old Dark House" (1932, James Whale).

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490)—Jan. 27 at 2:30 and Jan. 31 at 6: "Kakita Akanishi" (1936, directed by Mansaku Itami; in Japanese). . . . ¶ Jan. 27 at 5: "The Doors" (1991, Oliver Stone), with Val Kilmer, Frank Whaley, Kevin Dillon, Meg Ryan, and Kyle MacLachlan. . . . ¶ Jan. 27 at 6:30: A program of films by Emily Breer, who will be present. . . . ¶ Jan. 28 at 2:30 and Jan. 30 at 6: "Barfly" (1987, Barbet Schroeder), with Mickey Rourke, Faye Dunaway, and Alice Krige. . . . ¶ Jan. 28 at 6 and Jan. 30 at 2:30: "Scenes from the Class Struggle in Beverly Hills" (1989, Paul Bartel), with Jacqueline Bisset, Ray Sharkey, and Ed Begley, Jr. . . . ¶ Jan. 30 at 3 and 6: "Viet Nam 1990" (1990, John Alpert, Maryann DeLeo, and Quan Nguyen) and "Shimon Fingerprint" (1990, Kaz Takeuchi), both documentaries. . . . ¶ Jan. 31 at 2:30 and 6: "Leave Her to Heaven" (1945, John M. Stahl), with Gene Tierney, Cornel Wilde, Jeanne Crain, and Vincent Price. . . . ¶ Jan. 31 at 3: "Privilege" (1990, Yvonne Rainer). . . . ¶ Feb. 1 at 2 and Feb. 4 at 6: "The Devil and Daniel Webster" (1941, William Dieterle), with Walter Huston, Edward Arnold, and Anne Shirley. . . . ¶ Feb. 1 at 5 and Feb. 4 at 2:30: "Licence to Kill" (1989, John Glen), with Timothy Dalton. . . . ¶ Feb. 1-2 at 5: "The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner" (1962, Tony Richardson), with Michael Redgrave and Tom Courtenay. . . . ¶ Feb. 2 at 2 and Feb. 3 at 6: "Sugarbaby" (1985, Percy Adlon; in German). . . . ¶ Feb. 2 at 5 and Feb. 3 at 2:30: "Personal Services" (1987, Terry Jones), with Julie Walters and Alec McCowen. . . . ¶ Feb. 3 at 6:15: "Tales of a Forgotten Future, Parts 1-4" (1982). Directed by Lewis Klahr, who will be present.

Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level. (875-5600)—Jan. 27 at 2: "I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang" (1932, Mervyn LeRoy), with Paul Muni, Glenda Farrell, Edward Ellis, and Helen Vinson. . . . ¶ Jan. 27 at 4, Jan. 29 and Feb. 1 at 8:30, and Feb. 2 at 2: "The Three of Us" (1984, Pupi Avati; in Italian). . . . ¶ Jan. 27 at 6:30, Jan. 28 at 4:15, and Jan. 30 at 8:30: "The Devil's Playground" (1976, Fred Schepisi), with Arthur Dignam, Nick Tate, and Thomas Keneally. . . . ¶ Jan. 27 at 8:45: "My Man Godfrey" (1936, Gregory La Cava), with Carole Lombard, William Powell, Mischa Auer, and Alice Brady. . . . ¶ Jan. 28 at 2 and Jan. 29 at 4:15: "Love on the Dole" (1941, John Baxter), with George Carney and Deborah Kerr. . . . ¶ Jan. 28 at 6:30 and Jan. 29 at 2: "The Diary of a Country Priest" (1950, Robert Bresson; in French), with Claude Laydu and Nicole Maurey. . . . ¶ Jan. 28 at 9:30, Jan. 30 at 4:15, and Jan. 31 at 10:30: "Caged Heat" (1974, Jonathan Demme). . . . ¶ Jan. 29 at 6:30 and Jan. 30 at 2: "The Lost Son" (1934, Luis Trenker). . . . ¶ Jan. 30 at 6:15 and Feb. 1 at 2: "Barravento" (1962, Gláuber Rocha; a Brazilian film, in Portuguese). . . . ¶ Jan. 31 at 2, Feb. 2 at 6, and Feb. 3 at 2 and 9: "Scarface" (1932, Howard Hawks), with Paul Muni. . . . ¶ Jan. 31 at 4 and Feb. 2 at 4 and 8: "Charles Dead or Alive" (1969, Alain Tanner; in French). . . . ¶ Jan. 31 at 6, Feb. 1 at 10:15, and Feb. 2 at 10: "Gates of Heaven" (1978, Errol Morris). . . . ¶ Jan. 31 at 8 and Feb. 1 at 6: "The Man Who Lost His Shadow" (1991, Tanner; in French). Mr. Tanner will be present. . . . ¶ Feb. 1 at 3:45 and Feb. 5 at 8:30: "Jonah Who Will Be 25 in the Year 2000" (T). . . . ¶ Feb. 3 at 4 and 6:30 and Feb. 4 at 8:15: "La Salamandre" (1971, Tanner; in French). . . . ¶ Feb. 4 at 2 and Feb. 5 at 4:15: "Hard to Handle" (1933, Mervyn LeRoy), with James Cagney and Mary Brian. . . . ¶ Feb. 4 at 3:45 and 6 and Feb. 5 at 2: "Le Retour d'Afrique" (1973, Tanner; in French). . . . ¶ Feb. 5 at 6: "The Grapes of Wrath" (1940, John Ford), with Henry Fonda, Jane Darwell, John Carradine, and Charley Grapewin.

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway. (1-718 783-6501)—Feb. 1 at 2: "Senso" (see page 18). . . . ¶ Feb. 2 at 2: "The Leopard" (1963, Luchino Visconti), with Burt Lancaster, Alain Delon, Claudia Cardinale, Paolo Stoppa, and Rina Morelli.

Museum of Television and Radio, 25 W. 52nd St. (621-6800)—A Dennis Potter retrospective. Jan. 30 at 5:30, Jan. 31 at 6, and Feb. 1-2 at 2:30: "Brimstone and Treacle" (1976, BBC), with Denholm Elliott, Michael Kitchen, Patricia Lawrence, and Michelle Newell; and "Moonlight on the Highway" (1969, London Weekend Television), with Ian Holm.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow.)

At Play in the Fields of the Lord—Hector Babenco's film, which is based on Peter Matthiessen's 1965 novel of the same name, feels lifeless right from the start, and it perks up only occasionally in the course of the three hours and ten minutes it takes to tell its story. The movie is set in the Amazon basin, and it's about the destruction of an Indian tribe by a combination of capitalist greed (in the form of the local authorities) and cultural insensitivity (in the form of Protestant missionaries from America). The dramatic conflicts aren't very complex, and most of the characters are one-dimensional, instantly readable. Yet Babenco treats every scene as if it contained infinite riches: he draws out simple actions, reiterates obvious ideas, lingers on the faces of characters who have no more secrets to yield up. Among the actors—a high-powered group that includes John Lithgow, Tom Berenger, Kathy Bates, and Daryl Hannah—only Aidan Quinn, as a young missionary who learns to respect the Indians' culture, comes through at all. The effort that Babenco and his actors have put into dramatizing this material is heartbreakingly apparent, yet, no matter how hard they work, the scenes refuse to play, and the movie never manages to generate any real momentum. It's an honest, well-intentioned flop. Screenplay by Babenco and Jean-Claude Carrière.—T.R. (Reviewed in our issue of 12/16/91.) (Bay Cinema, and Beekman.)

Beauty and the Beast—It's got storytelling vigor and clarity, bright, eclectic animation, and a frisky musical wit. In this Disney version of the fairy tale, Belle (the voice of Paige O'Hara) is a book-reading French provincial girl—a virtuous sort of Mademoiselle Bovary. She dreams of a Prince Charming but gets more than she bargains for when she becomes hostage to the buffalolike Beast (the surprisingly orotund Robby Benson). Underneath his fang-gnashing glower, he's a prisoner of adolescence—unlike Peter Pan, he wants to grow up. He's the opposite of Belle's lunkheaded village suitor, Gaston (Richard White), a narcissistic macho man. Throughout, the Howard Ashman–Alan Menken score is clever and fluid in the best Lerner and Loewe manner, with flashes of oddball humor that keep everything light and bouncy. (Gaston's theme song trumps "C'est Moi," from "Camelot.") There's a great cast of supporting utensils at the Beast's enchanted castle, led by Jerry Orbach in an ebullient vocal turn as the Chevalier-like candleholder, Lumiere. David Ogden Stiers is Cogsworth, the mantel clock; Angela Lansbury is Mrs. Potts, the teapot; and Jo Anne Worley is the Wardrobe. There isn't anything particularly haunting, and not all the script's variations are fresh. But this is easily the zippiest Disney cartoon feature in the thirty years since "101 Dalmatians." Gary Trousdale and Kirk Wise directed; the screenplay by Linda Woolverton.—M.S. (Village East Cinemas, Cinema 3rd Avenue, and Guild. . . . ¶ 23rd St. West Triplex, and Metro Cinema. Matinées only.)

Bugsy—This opulent period gangster movie, written by James Toback and directed by Barry Levinson, is largely a showcase for the old-fashioned star magnetism of Warren Beatty, who plays the legendary Benjamin (Bugsy) Siegel. The screenplay portrays Bugsy as a charming, mercurial psychopath with a rather touching taste for glamour; it concentrates on the last few years of the hero's life, when he became a Hollywood celebrity and built the first hotel-casino in Las Vegas. He's a vivid, unpredictable, one-of-a-kind guy, and the filmmakers seem to realize that they can't take their eyes off him for a second. Siegel is a fascinating monster; we don't want to take our eyes off him, either. This is a rich role for Beatty, and he tears into it hungrily. It's the best kind of star performance: Beatty seems entirely himself, but in a new way. He's ferociously, mesmerizingly funny. Annette Bening plays Bugsy's lover, the tough, wily, independent-minded mob courtesan Virginia Hill, and she more than holds her own in her scenes with the star. And the movie is filled with pungent, memorable supporting performances. Ben Kingsley brings a surprisingly dry, elegant sense of comic timing to his portrait of sober Meyer Lansky (one of the hero's partners in the New York mob). Harvey Keitel, as Mickey Cohen, Bugsy's right-hand man in Los Angeles, spits out his profane lines as if they were live firecrackers. Elliott Gould plays the tiny role of Harry Greenberg, an aging, flabby mob schlemiel, and he's absolutely inspired; he plays this dazed character as a Willy Loman who has wandered too far from the old territory. Despite its lavish surface, this is essentially a movie of small, lovingly crafted pleasures. It's smart, swanky fun.—T.R. (12/30/91) (Loews Village Theatre VII, Murray Hill Cinemas, Gemini, Loews Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

At 68th St. Playhouse, "Hear My Song"

Cape Fear—Martin Scorsese's new film is a remake of a bluntly effective 1962 thriller about a middle-class family—husband, wife, teen-age daughter—who are terrorized by a devious, implacable psychopath. The original (which was based on a pulp novel by John D. MacDonald and directed by J. Lee Thompson) had the straight-ahead construction of a horror movie, and it never pretended that what it was doing was good for us. The remake muddies the waters with self-consciousness: Scorsese and the screenwriter, Wesley Strick, have loaded the movie with apparent moral ambiguities, facile ideas about guilt and redemption, and explicit attempts to portray the scuzzy villain as a mythic nemesis. This picture is much flashier and more assaultive than the original. But the Christian/mythological subtext that Scorsese dredges up and places in the foreground has the effect of increasing our emotional distance from the story. Besides, it isn't true subtext; it's stuff that has been imposed on, rather than discovered in, the material. This is still, at heart, a picture whose sole aim is to give its audience huge, bowel-loosening shocks. It's Scorsese's worst picture—an ugly, incoherent piece of work. With Robert De Niro (frenetic but thoroughly uninteresting as the villain), Nick Nolte, Jessica Lange, Juliette Lewis, and Illeana Douglas. Joe Don Baker, playing the small part of a private detective, gives the liveliest performance. The stars of the 1962 version, Robert Mitchum and Gregory Peck, make brief appearances, and the score is a reorchestration of Bernard Herrmann's original music.—T.R. (12/2/91) (First & 62nd Cinemas, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, and National Twin. . . ¶ Metro Cinema. Evenings only. . . . ¶ Art Greenwich Twin; through Jan. 30.)

Father of the Bride—This scene-by-scene remake, with Steve Martin in the Spencer Tracy role of the father racking up debts to give his daughter a big marital sendoff, is less credible and crunchy than the 1950 Vincente Minnelli production. The story was always just a mildly satirical ode to middle-class patriarchy and the idea of Daddy's Little Girl (Elizabeth Taylor then, Kimberly Williams now). But Minnelli knew how to use Tracy's weathered mug and stout, combative stance to get laughs and to suggest real experience. The old movie has a plush-covered deadpan. The Disney/Touchstone update, by the team of Charles Shyer and Nancy Meyers (he directs, they co-wrote), is sappier and sillier. Martin doesn't only play straight, he plays square. (For those who loved him in "Parenthood," here's "Daddyhood.") He turns into a scowler, while Diane Keaton, as his wife, is a beamer. She switches from high beams to low beams, and sometimes gets stuck in between. The Shyer/Meyers additions explain or fudge the retro material: Martin is a conservative sneaker manufacturer who brags that his town hasn't changed in twenty-five years; Williams shoots hoops and vows that she won't become a fifties housewife. Still, the movie peddles expensive nostalgia. Martin Short is surprisingly wearisome as a wedding coordinator.—M.S. (Village East Cinemas, Gramercy, Sutton, 86th Street East Twin, Olympia, and Embassy.)

The Fisher King—This hundred-and-thirty-seven-minute endurance test is the story of a former New York City "shock jock" (Jeff Bridges) who befriends a schizoid former medievalist (Robin Williams) and joins his quest for the Holy Grail. The gonzo filigree of the director, Terry Gilliam, surrounds this fable of redemption with pseudo-originality. The allusion-mongering of the writer, Richard LaGravenese, gives it delusions of grandeur. At heart, the film is no different from a whole string of Hollywood movies centering on mysterious madmen who may be legendary heroes. As usual for this drippy kind of film, Williams' throwback character, Parry—short for Parsifal—is supposed to inspire everybody with his virtuous whimsies. But Gilliam doesn't know how to give the fantasy any sentimental charm, and he's hell on the actors, including Mercedes Ruehl as Bridges' earthy lover and Amanda Plummer as Williams' gawky amorous ideal. They mug; Gilliam takes mug shots. The movie is a pecu-

Luchino Visconti wanted Ingrid Bergman and Marlon Brando to star in "Senso" (playing February 1, at the Brooklyn Museum), his 1954 epic of the risorgimento. He wound up with Alida Valli as Livia, a patriotic Venetian countess, and Farley Granger as Franz, the dreamy yet cynical Hapsburg lieutenant who bewitches her during the final months of Austria's occupation of her country. Luckily, Granger's callow superficiality fits the role of an officer who bounces between hedonism and schoolboy fantasies of glory. Valli comes through with passionate conviction as an unhappily married woman whose burst of erotic love explodes long-held moral and political principles. The whole movie has an intoxicating romanticism. Visconti encloses this doomed couple in an amorous bubble; then he whooshes them into history.

Frankly and exultantly operatic, "Senso" opens in an opera house. In the breathtaking first sequence, the rebellious spirit of Manrico, in "Il Trovatore," leaps from the stage to the balconies, where Italian partisans throw tricolored flowers and revolutionary pamphlets down onto the Austrian soldiers in the orchestra section. Even more inspired than this blast of Verdi is the presence of Bruckner's Seventh Symphony on the soundtrack. Visconti uses music often described as "cosmic" and cathedral-like to express Livia's vaulting illusions—her desperate belief in Franz's devotion and in his classical gas about the arbitrariness of national boundaries. In the love scenes, Visconti masterfully choreographs the play of hands on flesh and hair, and his large-scale action set pieces are both economical and surging. This movie probably influenced Bertolucci's "1900." In its attempt to depict the divided soul of a crisis-torn era, "Senso" is Visconti's "1866."

liarly irritating failure—a leaden piece of uplift.—M.S. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Eastside Cinemas, and Worldwide Cinemas.)

FOLLOW THE FLEET (1936)—Astaire and Rogers at their most buoyant. In this one, Astaire and Randolph Scott are (implausible) shipmates, and Rogers and Harriet Hilliard are (implausible) sisters. (From Hilliard's enervated performance, one would never guess that she would go on to become a TV star and spawn a dynasty.) The material, derived from the 1922 play "Shore Leave" (which had earlier become the musical "Hit the Deck"), had grown a bit of moss. The characters aren't as rich and sophisticated as in the best-known Astaire-Rogers movies but the corniness is lively. Astaire—chewing gum rhythmically—looks great in his bell-bottoms and he does a lot of snappy hoofing. (He's less balletic than usual here.) The numbers are mostly playful and fresh, and the Irving Berlin score includes "Let Yourself Go," "I'm Putting All My Eggs in One Basket," and the big finale, "Let's Face the Music and Dance." The cast includes Astrid Allwyn as the predatory bitch, and Betty Grable, Lucille Ball, Frank Jenks, and Tony Martin. Directed by Mark Sandrich; the script is by Dwight Taylor; the choreography is by Astaire and Hermes Pan.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Feb. 2.)

FOR THE BOYS—Bette Midler plays Dixie Leonard, a singer-dancer-comedienne who becomes famous in the early days of the Second World War, when she teams up with an established star named Eddie Sparks (James Caan, who gives the movie's best performance). Framed by an award ceremony at which Dixie and Eddie are to be honored for their many years of entertaining troops on U.S.O. tours, the story is told in a series of flashbacks. Most of the big sequences take place in wartime: in London and North Africa during the Second World War; in Korea in the early fifties; in Vietnam in 1969. This structure allows Midler to perform musical numbers from different eras and to attempt the acting tour de force of playing a character at several distinct stages of life. She piles persona on top of persona on top of persona for two and a half hours in an effort to overwhelm us with the sheer force and infinite variety of herself: she is the world. In the Second World War sequences, the picture has a certain trashy charm, but the Korea and Vietnam scenes feature "realistic" combat footage and glib antiwar sentiments. Bette Midler begins as a red-hot mama and winds up as Mother Courage. And this vanity production is such an ordeal that it turns into a demonstration of a startling thesis: war is bad, but entertainment is hell. Also with George Segal, Christopher Rydell, and Arye Gross. Directed by Mark Rydell, from a screenplay by Marshall Brickman, Neal Jimenez, and Lindy Laub.—T.R. (12/16/91) (First & 62nd Cinemas.)

FREEJACK—This time-hopping and time-wasting adventure stars Emilio Estevez as a race-car driver and Mick Jagger as the high-tech body snatcher who plucks Estevez out of a car wreck and sends him eighteen years into the future. The supposedly brain-dead Estevez is meant to supply the host body for the mind of an aging oligarch. Instead, Estevez regains consciousness and becomes a "freejack," pursued by Jagger's bounty hunters and a megacorporation belonging to Anthony Hopkins. There's no imaginative skulduggery. The action is rooted in executive-suite chicanery involving Hopkins' favorite employee, Rene Russo, who happens to be the racer's former lover, and Hopkins' second-in-command (Jonathan Banks). Robert Sheckley's source novel, "Immortality, Inc.," is just an amusing futuristic farrago, but at least it runs the gamut of afterlife theories. The script (by Steven Pressfield, Ronald Shusett, and Dan Gilroy) does little more than make Estevez run the gauntlet. The director, Geoff Murphy ("Utu"), tries to enliven the film with broad supporting caricatures, including David Johansen as Estevez's slimy manager and Amanda Plummer as a foul-talking sister—a literal blue nun. Jagger provides the only real kick. He delivers two prime pieces of sarcasm with stunning naturalness, as if he'd thought of them himself. Given the rest of the dialogue, he probably did.—M.S. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Loews 19th Street East 6, Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews New York Twin, Loews Orpheum VII, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

THE HAND THAT ROCKS THE CRADLE—This vengeful-nanny thriller has a catchy ad campaign: "Trust is her weapon. Innocence her opportunity. Revenge her only desire." The filmmakers, too, go after the trusting and innocent, but their desire is to make a killing at the box office. The twenty-eight-year-old screenwriter, Amanda Silver, spells out everything as if for the intelligence-impaired. Annabella Sciorra plays Claire, a devoted wife, mother, and, yes, botanist who blows the whistle on a lascivious gynecologist, catalyzing his suicide. Rebecca De Mornay is Peyton, the bad doctor's widow, who loses her own child and lies her way into Claire's nursery. And Ernie Hudson is the heroic, mentally challenged handyman who is wise with children: his name, of course, is Solomon. (Claire's husband, Michael, played by Matt McCoy, is a nonentity.) The director, Curtis Hanson, made two sharp, original suspense movies, "The Bedroom Window" (which he also wrote) and "Bad Influence," and scripted a third, "The Silent Partner." Here, Silver supplies the control board and Hanson just pushes the buttons. With its banal, docile household threatened by an enemy within, the film is like "The Stepfather" without wit or irony. De Mornay's Peyton gets off one campy verbal swipe at Solomon that's sure to be a favorite at high-school study halls, but Julianne Moore, as Michael's first love and Claire's friend, gives the performance of the movie. She's coiled and out there, like an exposed spring. She's also funny; she makes spikiness likable.—M.S. (Village East Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, Cinema I, 86th Street East Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy.)

HOOK—Steven Spielberg's film means to give a contemporary spin to J. M. Barrie's classic "Peter Pan." The movie is a failure in almost every way, but it's unmistakably of our time: its lack of conviction and its panicky eagerness to please are depressingly up-to-the-minute. The script, by Jim V. Hart and Malia Scotch Marmo, presents Peter Pan as a grown-up American family man named Peter Banning (Robin Williams). Banning, a yuppie corporate lawyer, has no idea that he was ever Peter Pan, and he's so wrapped up in making money that he neglects his wife and kids. The movie contrives to send him back to Neverland, where he rediscovers his former identity and does battle with his old nemesis, Captain Hook (Dustin Hoffman). The filmmakers use up their energy and our patience in scattershot attempts to appeal to every conceivable audience. The whole sorry spectacle turns out to be a kind of self-help fairy tale, an illustrated lecture on finding the inner child. The picture is full of special-effects "magic," but the tricks feel strained; we're constantly aware of the anxiety and the backbreaking effort it's taking to produce them, and that's no kind of magic at all. The movie seems drenched in flop sweat. In this version of "Peter Pan," the imagination feels like a burden—a terrible, crushing obligation.—T.R. (12/30/91) (Loews 19th Street East 6, Loews Orpheum VII, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center. . . . ¶ Coronet; through Jan. 30.)

JFK—Oliver Stone's movie means to demonstrate that the assassination of John F. Kennedy was not the act of a disturbed Marxist loner named Lee Harvey Oswald but the result of a vast, complex right-wing conspiracy. The screenplay, by Stone and Zachary Sklar, packs an extraordinary amount of assassination lore into three hours and eight minutes; it also includes a ton of speculative material about governmental misconduct, and quite a few invented characters. The movie is a thick gumbo of truths, half-truths, unverifiable hypotheses, and pure rant, and Stone ladles it out indiscriminately. In essence, the conspiracy theory argued here amounts to a series of inferential leaps proceeding from a speculation (that J.F.K. was killed because he wanted to pull out of Vietnam and end the Cold War). It's all bombast and misdirection, like a courtroom summation by a lawyer who knows that he can't win on the evidence. Stone comes on like a fearless radical, but his attitude toward the audience is firmly in the Hollywood tradition: he tries to bypass the intellect and go straight for the gut. The picture plays like an endless episode of "America's Most Wanted." Its hysterical manner and its slipshod handling of the facts actually have the effect of diminishing the credibility of the case for conspiracy. The clearest sounds we hear in this movie are those of Oliver Stone shooting himself in the foot. With Kevin Costner as New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison, Sissy Spacek as his wife, Gary Oldman as Oswald, and an all-star cast of witnesses and conspirators: Tommy Lee Jones, Joe Pesci (an abominable performance), Donald Sutherland, Kevin Bacon, Jack Lemmon, Ed Asner, John Candy, Walter Matthau. Garrison himself does a brief turn as Chief Justice Warren.—T.R. (1/13/92) (Loews Village Theatre VII, Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews Tower East, Chelsea Cinemas, and Loews Columbus Circle.)

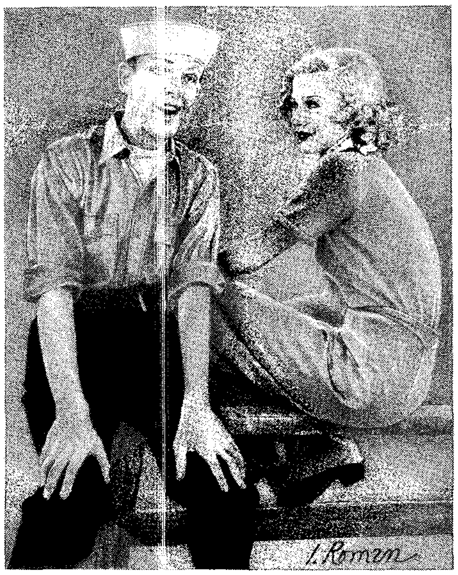
JONAH WHO WILL BE 25 IN THE YEAR 2000 (1976)—A whirling political comedy about the seventies' lunatic fringe of people in their twenties and thirties, each with his own answers to the problems of society. This film, a play of ideas with the laconic irony of Renoir's "Boudu Saved from Drowning" and Buñuel's "The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie," stays suspended in the air, spinning—a marvellous toy, weightless, yet precise and controlled. The director, Alain Tanner, and his co-writer, John Berger, are willing to entertain possibilities for social rebirth even if they're cracked or pickled. It's a romantic, mystic, utopian comedy—an Easter fable, with a dialectical bunny. Set in Geneva (the birthplace of Rousseau); with Miou-Miou, Jean-Luc Bideau, and Raymond Bussières. In French.—P.K. (Walter Reade Theatre; Feb. 1 and 5.)

Life Is Sweet—In this wonderful new comedy, the English writer and director Mike Leigh ("High Hopes") takes us into the domestic life of a lower-middle-class family in Middlesex. The characters are, by conventional standards, ordinary, but they aren't dreary, and their actions aren't predictable; the movie doesn't treat anyone as a type. Wendy (Alison Steadman) is an attractive, ebullient middle-aged woman who's always on the move, always doing something. Her husband, Andy (Jim Broadbent), is an amiable dawdler, a guy who starts ambitious home-improvement projects and never quite gets around to finishing them. They're the parents of a ludicrously mismatched set of twins: Natalie (Claire Skinner), a quiet, serious, dignified girl; and Nicola (Jane Horrocks), who hates her life and responds with snarls and contemptuous epithets to even the most innocuous attempts at conversation. Leigh doesn't give us an obvious narrative hook—a clear sense of what the story is going to be about or what sort of dramatic revelations he might have in store for us. And, despite Nicola's bratty outbursts, the tone is light and casual. Leigh doesn't manipulate our responses; he roughs them up a little, though. By means of a dense texture of tiny behavioral details and disconcerting shifts of style, he attempts to reshuffle our emotions. He prepares us to accept the moments of piercing, almost miraculous clarity that arise, as if by accident, at the end of his best films. In this picture, he builds up to a conversation between Wendy and Nicola that is perhaps the most extraordinary scene in recent movies. Also with Stephen Rea and Timothy Spall.—T.R. (11/4/91) (Quad Cinema. . . . ¶ Carnegie Hall Cinema; through Feb. 4.)

Madame Bovary—Calling writer-director Claude Chabrol's adaptation of the Flaubert classic Masterpiece Theatre-style moviemaking is unfair to Masterpiece Theatre: the BBC mini-series starring Francesca Annis and Tom Conti had more humor, grit, and oomph. This is the Classics Illustrated comic-book version. In two hours and eight minutes, it trots through the central plot, conveying key dialogue, descriptions, and contrasts in linked vignettes and verbal bits that would fit into thought balloons. A narrator captions what the adapter fails to picture or dramatize. Isabelle Huppert is disastrous casting in the title role. Flaubert divulged Emma Bovary's oscillations via her eyes, but Huppert's less-than-divine orbs remain impassive even when she's supposed to be galvanizing. At one point, the narrator emphasizes the "hellish recklessness" and sensuality in Emma's gaze as she tries to compel her lover Leon (Lucas Belvaux) into committing embezzlement. Yet all we see is Huppert glaring at him with mercenary intent. It's as if Chabrol were banking that viewers will disregard the evidence of their own eyes. In French.—M.S. (Angelika Film Center, and Carnegie Hall Cinemas.)

My Own Private Idaho—This new feature by the independent filmmaker Gus Van Sant is like an exploded version of his previous films "Mala Noche" and "Drugstore Cowboy," and it scatters meanings all over the landscape. It's a beautiful disaster, like a bomb test in the middle of nowhere. The movie is set primarily in Van Sant's familiar territory—the seedier parts of Portland, Oregon—and its main characters are a pair of young hustlers, Mike (River Phoenix) and Scott (Keanu Reeves), who sell their bodies on the street. Mike is a narcoleptic: every time he blacks out, he has lyrical dreams composed of imagery from his childhood. Scott, who is the son of Portland's mayor, is modelled on Shakespeare's Prince Hal; the Falstaff character here is a scruffy gay cokehead called Bob (William Richert), and his scenes with Scott are stylized variations of incidents from both parts of "Henry IV" (hence also variations on Orson Welles' "Chimes at Midnight"). Van Sant takes a lot of chances, and visually the movie is so imaginative, so fiercely alive, that it carries us along. But when the over-all design of the picture becomes clear, we feel cheated rather than enlightened. Scott turns into a villain; Bob is ennobled as a symbol of outlaw freedom; and Mike takes on the aura of a holy fool, the Prince Myshkin of the Portland meat market. Van Sant's vision is disappointingly trite and schematic. Phoenix, however, gives a remarkably intelligent and intuitive performance.—T.R. (10/7/91) (Angelika Film Center, and Worldwide Cinemas.)

Night of the Iguana (1964)—Richard Burton is the defrocked clergyman working as a tour guide; Ava Gardner is the strumpety widow who operates the run-down Mexican hotel where the action centers; Deborah Kerr is the saintly, middle-aged spinster from Nantucket, travelling with her ninety-seven-year-old poet-grandfather (Cyril Delevanti); Sue Lyon is the teen-ager out to seduce the minister; and Grayson Hall is the head of the schoolteachers' tour group. The director, John Huston, brings some coarse melodramatic vitality to the Tennessee Williams play, but whatever poetry it had seems to have leaked out. And without that the movie is terribly obvious, sentimental, and plain dumb. It's also indifferently made.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Feb. 4.)



Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers in "Follow the Fleet"

The Prince of Tides—Barbra Streisand's film, adapted from Pat Conroy's 1986 novel, is a big, earnest psychoanalytic soap opera. It's a story in which people come to terms with their past, make peace with the demons that have haunted them since childhood, learn how to let go of the "dysfunctional" emotional patterns inflicted on them by their parents, and become sensitive, caring human beings. Streisand treats this banal material affectionately, even reverently, but it plays better on the screen than it does on the page. Her direction is smooth and canny, and she has distilled the novel to its corn-based essence: the film's strong Hollywood brew of pop uplift, soft-focus romance, and middle-class melodrama seems the ideal form for Conroy's story. But the fumes of the novel's terrible ideas linger in the air. After a while, everything begins to feel predictable. Conroy's narrative method (he co-wrote the screenplay, with Becky Johnston) consists of establishing characters who embody common stereotypes, setting them in motion around each other, and then watching them follow the courses that he's mapped for them: his message is one of change and liberation, but his characters' orbits are fixed. As the soul-searching hero, Tom Wingo, Nick Nolte bears the weight of all the movie's ambitions, and, for the most part, he carries his burden with miraculous grace. Streisand plays a sympathetic New York psychiatrist and never seems to get the hang of the role, but most of the cast performs heroically: Blythe Danner, as Tom's wife, and Kate Nelligan, as his mother, are wonderful. This is an admirably scrupulous job of literary adaptation; it's the material that's dysfunctional. Also with Jeroen Krabbé, Jason Gould, Melinda Dillon, Brad Sullivan, and George Carlin. The appalling score is by James Newton Howard.—T.R. (1/27/92) (Loews Village Theatre VII, 34th St. East, Loews New York Twin, Loews Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, and Regency. . . . ¶ Ziegfeld; through Jan. 30.)

Rhapsody in August—These days, people are more interested in Kurosawa than he is in being Kurosawa. With this weak, tepid brew of message movie and family drama, the sensei moves farther away than ever from his trademark imagistic energy toward the contemplative style of previous Japanese masters. (Even the title recalls Ozu.) In this tri-generational story, four children vacation with their grandmother (Sachiko Murase) in the country outside Nagasaki while their parents visit a granduncle and his half-American son (Richard Gere), in Hawaii. Kurosawa shows none of Ozu's ability to particularize and intensify domestic happiness and heartbreak. The few memorable shots come when the kids, weaned from television, see nature through the poetry of their grandmother's household lore. When they become obsessed with the Nagasaki A-bomb, which killed their grandfather, everything turns preachy and disingenuous. Gere plays a Yankee who speaks Japanese and empathizes with his Asian relatives. Kurosawa wants to transcend anti-Americanism; the grandmother says that War, not the Bomb, is the problem. But no one raises the question of why wars start. This movie's pacifism is a pacifier. In Japanese.—M.S. (Lincoln Plaza; thrtough Jan. 30. . . . ¶ Quad Cinema; starting Jan. 31.)

Rocco and His Brothers (1961)—Luchino Visconti's strange sprawling epic—a flamboyant melodrama about how a poor Sicilian family (a mother and her five sons) is corrupted and eventually destroyed by life in Milan. Visconti's methods are still partly neorealist, but the scale of the film is huge and operatic, and it loses the intimacy of the best neorealist films, and their breath of life. This is more like a hollow, spectacular version of a Warners movie of the thirties (three of the sons take turns in the prizefight ring) but the characters aren't as vivid and individualized as the Warners actors made them. The movie is memorable largely because of Annie Girardot's stunning performance as a prostitute; her role suggests that of Dostoyevski's great heroine in "The Idiot," while her final scene suggests "Woyzeck." The weirdest aspect of the film is the casting of Alain Delon (who at times seems to be lighted as if he were Hedy Lamarr) as a saintly, simple Prince Myshkin. Renato Salvatori plays the most forceful of the brothers—it's actually his sexual passion rather than the horrors of urban existence that destroys the family. Also with Katina Paxinou as the mother, and Roger Hanin, Paolo Stoppa, Suzy Delair, and Claudia Cardinale. The script is adapted from the novel "The Bridge of Ghisolfa," by Giovanni Testori; there are also suggestions of the Biblical story of Joseph and his brethren. Cinematography by Giuseppe Rotunno; music by Nino Rota. In Italian.—P.K. (Public Theatre.)

Rush—What a misnomer! Based on Kim Wozencraft's autobiographical novel about a Texas male-female narc team who cook evidence in more ways than one, this movie is a stone drag. With Jennifer Jason Leigh and Jason Patric skillfully imitating the ravages of addiction and withdrawal, it's basically an old-fashioned junkie drama. Even though the director, Lili Fini Zanuck, cast one of the wiliest actors from "Drugstore Cowboy," Max Perlich, as a dealer-turned-snitch, she didn't learn much from that movie. Zanuck doesn't convey the exhilaration and the jumping adrenaline that hook the protagonists. The movie is all falling action, and we're not even sure where the characters are falling *from*. Novelist-turned-screenwriter Pete Dexter, who did the adaptation, shares the usual Hollywood disdain for "back story." A canny group of actors play the bad guys, and they're better defined than the heroes—the rogues' gallery takes over the midway. It includes Special K McCray, who displays a dazzling, derisive chuckle as a black heroin honcho; William Sadler, who exudes psycho-killer ambience as a pusher of "blue ringers"; and the massive, stoic Gregg Allman, who's potently ambiguous as a racketeer suspected of being the kingpin. Eric Clapton's virtuoso rock score advances the tension and the druggy romance more than the filmmakers or the stars do. The transparent Leigh acts out, the opaque Patric acts in, but these opposites don't attract.—M.S. (Village East Cinemas, Cinema II, 23rd St. West Triplex, Metro Cinema, and Criterion Center.)

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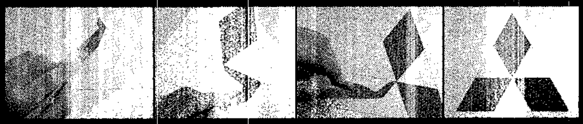

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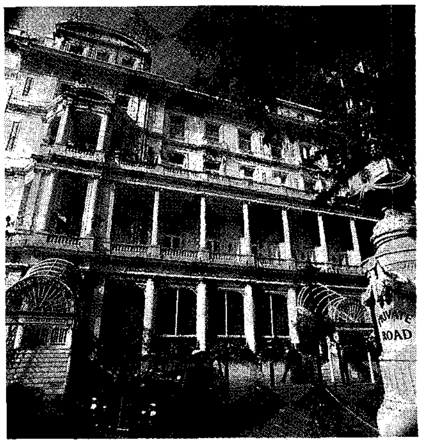

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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

Consuelo Parra was born in Arecibo, Puerto Rico, on November 5, 1902, the youngest in a family of four girls and one boy: Carmen, Manuela, Rosa, and Lorenzo. In the late twenties, Consuelo moved to New York City with her brother and sisters, and they all lived together on the Upper West Side. Lorenzo pushed a fruit cart, one sister married, Consuelo found work as a seamstress. She worked in shops in the garment district, sewing ladies' dresses, and she went to Mass every day—for thirty years at the Church of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal, and then, when that church closed, at St. Francis of Assisi Church, on Thirty-first Street. She went on working as a seamstress until she was almost eighty years old.

We first met Consuelo Parra at about eight o'clock on Christmas night, at the northwest corner of Columbus Avenue and Eighty-fifth Street. The block was nearly deserted, and it was easy to notice the small elderly woman, in a light cotton dress, a blue sweater, and a blue knit cap, standing on the corner, her back to the street. She did not speak to us. We walked past her and crossed the street, and stopped and turned around. What stopped us was the image of her, which registered in our head only as we crossed the street. She hadn't spoken to us, but her lips were moving and her body trembled, and we thought we had seen money clutched in one hand and a lost look in her eye.

We crossed back. "Are you all right?" we asked. She said something in a voice so soft that we couldn't make out the words. She was shaking from the cold, and she held money in one hand and a purse in the other. She was shorter than five feet tall, but even when we put our head down next to her we couldn't make out a single word she said. A restaurant across Columbus was open. "Are you cold?" we asked. "Would you like to come over and sit in the restaurant and get warm?" She answered something. We offered her an arm, and together we navigated slowly across Columbus Avenue and into the restaurant and sat down in a booth. "Would you like coffee or tea?" we said. Tea, she said. It was the first thing she said that we understood.

She was a handsome woman, with dark eyes and high cheekbones and long gray braids that she wore pinned up in coils on the sides of her head. She seemed unperturbed. She put down on the table the money in her hand—four one-dollar bills. We asked her, "Do you live near here?" and she said something that was calm and good-humored and logical but completely incomprehensible. We asked for her address, and after some sign language (is it here? in your purse? may we see?) she allowed us to look in her purse as she sipped her tea. We found an old envelope addressed to Consuelo Parra on West 105th Street. "Are you Consuelo Parra?" we asked. She nodded. There was also a report card with her name on it from Arecibo High School, dated July 21, 1920. And a photograph of four girls in white dresses, all of them beautiful, and one of three women and a man at Coney Island many years ago.

WE ARE
NOW
OPEN
MONDAY

We asked her where she was going and if she knew anybody in the neighborhood. We asked her if she had relatives. She said some more. We kept asking questions, not knowing what else to do, and then two police officers—a man and a woman—walked in, and we asked them to help her. They asked her more questions.

A man two booths away asked, "Is she Jewish?"

"No, she's Puerto Rican," we said.

He shrugged. The busboy spoke Spanish; he learned from Consuelo that she lived alone on West 105th and that she was on her way to a food store.

"All we can do is put her on an uptown bus," the woman officer said.

"She won't make it," we said. "She's confused. Can't you call for a squad car?"

The officers conferred. The woman seemed to be in favor of calling a squad car, but the man looked away and put on his cap. "What can we do?" he said. "There's nothing we can do."

"How about a shelter?" we asked.

The woman officer made a face, and said, "You send her to a shelter, she'll lose what little she's got." We wondered about putting her in a cab—

a cab was parked in front of the restaurant, the engine idling—and the police conferred again; the man shook his head. All this time, Consuelo sat serenely drinking her tea.

We didn't want to be in charge of Consuelo Parra, but we couldn't leave her, either. The woman officer seemed to feel the same way; we looked at her, and she looked back at us—a brief exchange of silent queries—and something clicked. She turned away and spoke into a little square microphone mounted on her epaulet, and less than a minute later a squad car pulled up in front of the restaurant, then an unmarked police car, and then an ambulance, and now there were six police officers and two paramedics on the scene.

One of the paramedics wheeled a stretcher into the restaurant. The restaurant owner, standing at the cash register, looked stricken. "She can walk," he said. "Do you need to bring that in here?"

The paramedic snapped at him, "I don't tell you how to do your job—don't tell me how to do mine." The other paramedic unwound a blood-pressure band and fastened it around Consuelo Parra's arm. She accepted this with the same stoicism with which she had let us look through her purse. "Are you with her?" one of the new policemen asked us. We told our story. The paramedics wrapped Consuelo in a blanket and helped her onto the stretcher. "God bless you," she said to no one in particular. They wheeled her out, and into the ambulance, and that was the last we saw of her—a tiny old woman on a stretcher—until two weeks ago, when we called around to a couple of hospitals and found her at Lenox Hill.

We went over to visit her, and met her nephew Nicolás Parra, who was also visiting. Mr. Parra was standing next to his aunt's bed, watching her eat dinner. He was a short, soft-spoken man with wavy dark hair and clear, unblinking brown eyes. He said that Consuelo suffered from arteriosclerosis and had been ill for a few months. He thought that on Christmas night she had been on her way to the Holy Name of Jesus Church, at Amsterdam and Ninety-sixth, and had missed her bus stop. He had seen her a few days before that, crossing Ninety-sixth on her way to church, and had told her that it was too dangerous for her to be out. " 'God takes care of me,' " he said she had told him. "She can't go back to her apartment now," he added. "She'll go to a nursing home."

"What was she like before she got sick?" we asked.

He said, "She was the head of the pack. She was the most bossy, the most talkative. She was very particular. She never got married, because she never wanted to leave the family. She had a big piano, and she and Rosa played *danza*—you know, Puerto Rican music. She had her own place at the table. Always. Nobody else ever sat there. One of the sisters stayed home and cooked; the others worked. She worked." He told us about Consuelo's being a seamstress, and then he said, "She never married, but she had a friend. They went together for a long time. They used to sit in the Horn & Hardart at Thirty-third and Eighth Avenue. I used to see them sitting there. His name was Alberto."

He leaned down over his aunt. "*Lo amabas muchísimo, a Alberto?*" he asked. Consuelo looked up and smiled. She spoke to him in Spanish.

"She says that when you lose something you have patience," Mr. Parra said. "You have to have patience, because everybody has to die." He looked at us. "She didn't know anybody else but him."

We said goodbye to Mr. Parra and took Consuelo's hand and said good night. She looked happy, having eaten a little of her dinner. She pushed a piece of apple pie in our direction and smiled. "Sleep well," we said.

"Thank you," she said. "God bless you."

• •

Magic

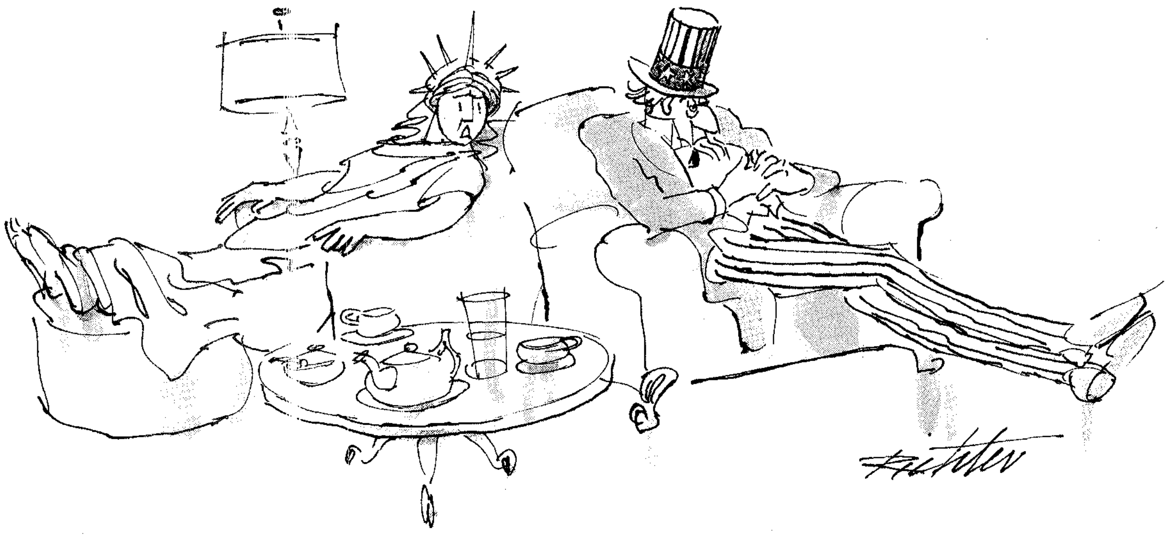
THE airbrush is a peculiarly American instrument of artistic expression (it's peculiarly American because, for one thing, it has begun to be taken over by the Japanese), and *Airbrush Action*, a magazine based in Lakewood, New Jersey, is its bible. "The obnoxious definition of an airbrush is 'a penlike instrument that atomizes paint,' " Cliff Stieglitz, the publisher of *Airbrush Action*, likes to say. Cliff thinks that this definition is obnoxious because it is inadequate to the universe of airbrush possibilities. The gleaming chrome hot rod framed against an unbelievably clean malt-shop window, the void of space with the single metallic spacecraft passing through in the dim light of Neptune's dawn, the robot girl with Jayne Mansfield proportions—these are the kinds of effects that can be rendered only with an airbrush. Since an airbrush is also a lot of fun to play with, the airbrush world is divided into several factions, ranging from kids who airbrush T-shirts, through kids who airbrush personalized license plates, to serious illustrators who get to do covers for *Omni*. (An *Omni* cover is the airbrush equivalent of a Whitney retrospective.)

FOR SALE
Judith Shahn

Not long ago, four major figures in American airbrush assembled on the steps of Pearl Paint, on Canal Street. One was Cliff Stieglitz, and the others were the airbrush artists Jerry LoFaro, Stanislaw Fernandes, and Bill Jonas, and they were all on their way to pay a courtesy call on Allen Shefts, the C.E.O. of Pearl Paint. Most of the people on the steps had at one time or another been featured in *Airbrush Action*, so for the many airheads who happened to pass by this was an almost incredible concentration of legends to come upon.

The group went inside and found Allen Shefts in his office. He is a large, bearded man whose idea of an affectionate greeting is "What? What?" and as soon as Cliff Stieglitz had asked him how business was by him, Allen asked Cliff how business was by *him*.

"It's fabulous," Cliff said. He is intense and stocky and wears a cellular phone and a pager on his belt at all times. "This is our seventh year. And when we got started everything else was dying in airbrush. *Airbrush World* went down, and then *Airbrush Digest*, and *Airbrush Techniques*, and an airbrush newsletter. We were going to launch against *Airbrush Digest*, but they folded before we even got out. So we bought



"We have no friends, just allies."

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up their list and drove a stake through their heart. But you know what keeps us going now? What keeps us going now is the instructional videos."

"I know," Allen said. "It's amazing—I'm selling three hundred, four hundred guns every month now. Not so long ago, that was what we did in a year."

Cliff nodded wearily. "It's the T-shirts, right?"

"Yeah, it's T-shirts. The whole of Broadway is alive with T-shirts. We're selling portable compressors all week long. We get calls: 'I need a compressor in twelve seconds!' " He laughed. "It's like subway art in the seventies—same kind of people, only more honest."

Jerry LoFaro, a tall, serious man who had brought along a presentation copy of his new book, "How Life Began"—a history of evolution, featuring gleaming airbrush fish crawling out of a gleaming airbrush ocean to live on gleaming airbrush land—shook his head. "It's the *magic* of it," he said. "You just seem to be waving a magic wand at a T-shirt, and a picture appears."

"It's a kind of performance art, isn't it," said the elegant Stanislaw Fernandes, whose *Omni* covers are airbrush legend. He flicked his wrist quickly up and down, as if he were holding an invisible rapier.

"But it's not just T-shirts; it's license plates, it's vans, it's guitars—it's goddam *nails*," Cliff said.

The airbrush was invented around the turn of the century, when an anonymous photo retoucher discovered that an atomizer of gray paint allowed him to spray out a particular portion of a photograph and leave no visible trace behind. In this manner, the airbrush eliminated Trotsky from countless Communist rallies, and stains from the teeth of countless movie stars. The only commercial illustrators who used the airbrush in the first two-thirds of the century were girlie artists, like Vargas, and for most of that time the airbrush was really a kind of depilatory—used to remove body hair from real women or else to depict imaginary women who had no body hair in the first place.

Then, around 1969, a California commercial illustrator named Charles White III picked up an airbrush and found that with it you could create art of almost photographic verisimilitude. A few years later, he made the additional, profound discovery that if you spray brown paint beneath a black horizon line, and then sky blue above it, you can create an uncannily convincing illusion of shining chrome—you can create an entire chrome universe. On the basis of these discoveries, a recent issue of *Airbrush Action* compared Charles White to William Shakespeare, Babe Ruth, and Christopher Columbus. White's first breakthrough airbrush illustration was a perfectly rendered cracked egg, made for the cover of the magazine *IDEA* in 1973. His masterpiece was a poster for the movie of the Rolling Stones' 1974 tour—a monumental winged chrome mouth and tongue.

After White's egg, the airbrush world began to expand. A Japanese illustrator named Hajime Sorayama put together Vargas-style girls with White-style gleaming chrome, for example, and started the immensely successful and influential "Sexy Robot" series. Jerry LoFaro specializes in a kind of hyper-real photographic naturalism—renderings of natural landscapes in which each leaf has its own highlight and all vestiges of human handiwork have been erased. Stanislaw Fernandes airbrushes lasers and helmets and metallic women and, occasionally, shining, helmeted, high-cheekboned women with lasers emerging from their helmets—creations he calls Femenoids.

The four men left Allen's office and trooped upstairs to look at the airbrush department. When they got there, Jerry LoFaro blushed with pleasure and embarrassment. In his honor, Pearl Paint was running, on a monitor above a display case, an instructional video in which Jerry stars. The video is entitled "The Paasche AB Turbo," and was produced by Cliff Stieglitz. The mise en scène of "The Paasche AB Turbo" seems to owe something to the work of Robert Bresson and Eric Rohmer: it is a single, hour-long closeup of Jerry LoFaro's hands as he fools around with the pesky and temperamental Paasche AB Turbo airbrush. Jerry watched for a few minutes. "It looks good," he said, and then furrowed his brow. "Maybe it could have been tightened up there?"

"No, it couldn't have been tighter," Cliff said decisively. "It's got the right pace for the subject." His beeper went off. He removed the phone from his belt and began to talk airbrush finance with an assistant back in Lakewood. Meanwhile, Stanislaw Fernandes called for an Iwata airbrush—a favorite of his—and began to doodle. As his wrist flew back and forth, an invisible stream of red paint somehow created, on a white page a few feet away, a drawing of a liquid, seductive woman's eye.

Jerry LoFaro was still watching the monitor. The hands continued to manipulate the airbrush. "This is *definitely* a video for a very specific purpose," he said, a little glumly.

"Could use some special effects," a customer in a Raiders cap said.

"No," Cliff said, suddenly looking up from his phone. "It's the magician at work. The man behind the airbrush. *He's* the special effect."

Optimism

RIGHT now we are looking at the cover of a magazine. The magazine is *Life* of January 11, 1963. We won't point out just how many grim things hadn't happened as of January 11, 1963. The picture on the cover of this *Life* is of Ann-Margret. Not long ago, we were in a hotel room talking with Ann-Margret, who is one of the few real blond movie stars of—can you call it the old school when it is the class of 1963? And we have been thinking about the experience off and on ever since, in reference to Hollywood, the automobile industry, and American optimism. The Hollywood part is self-explanatory, and we will get to the automobile industry in a moment. As for optimism, it seems to us that Ann-Margret is one of America's *legitimate* links to optimism at a time when faked optimism amid legitimate pessimism is the rule. Ann-Margret is a little like the Ukraine. She is someone who used to be a part of something big and has survived the collapse of what she used to be a part of. Ann-Margret's film début was in "Pocketful of Miracles." She played Bette Davis's daughter. She survived that, and playing opposite Elvis Presley in "Viva Las Vegas," and a whole lot more. In 1972, she fell off a stage in Lake Tahoe, breaking almost every bone in her face, and she survived. From the point of view of survival, Ann-Margret is more interesting than Svetlana, for instance. Remember Svetlana? Stalin's daughter who defected to the West? Well, Ann-Margret didn't have to go anywhere. She lives with her husband in Benedict Canyon. Her husband is Roger Smith, who was one of the stars of "77 Sunset Strip," a television show that somehow prefigured postmodern living: the idea was that you could be stylish, hip, and not insane working out of the Sunset Strip.

Now, here is the situation we are in: whenever we look at the January 11, 1963, *Life*, we remember being in a hushed, luxurious hotel room with Ann-Margret, and all the time we were there in the room we were thinking about the picture on the cover of *Life*. There is almost no way to describe the picture. What you have is a very happy young woman dancing for the camera. She is standing on her left foot—on her toes. Her back is to the camera, and she is looking over her shoulder. The look she is giving us is—well, it's a big, exhilarated, generous look. "Ann-Margret's Spin to Movie Stardom" is the tag. The editors of *Life* are no fools: they use the big look as a kind of magnet. About halfway down her beautiful body is a headline that looks like this:

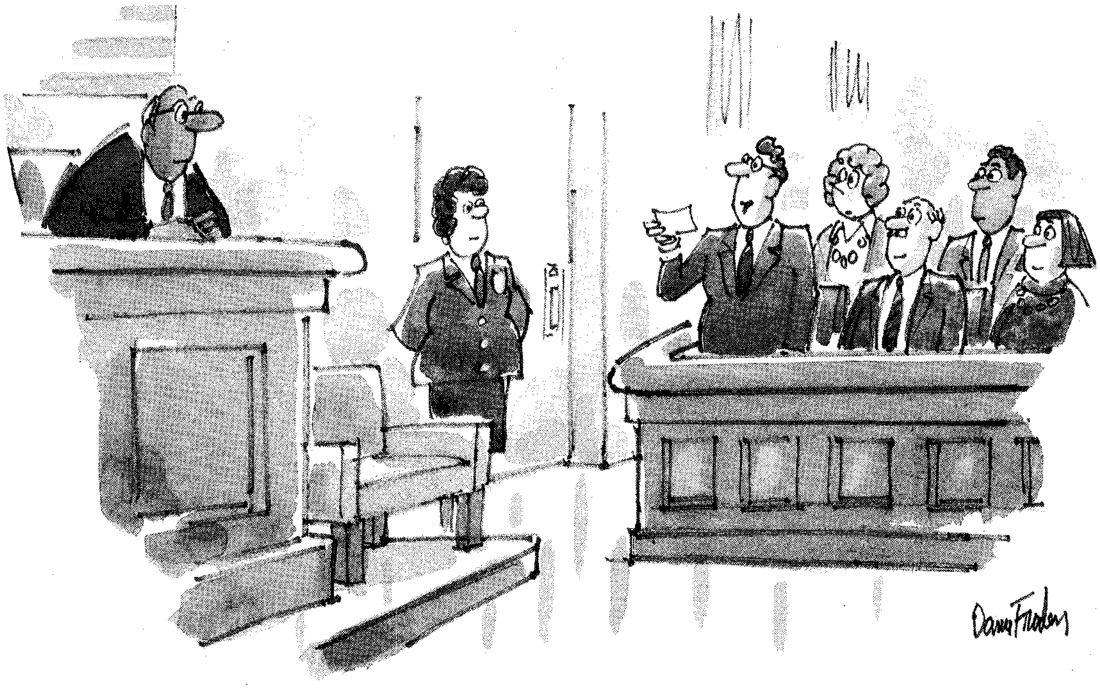
GLOW FROM
DETROIT
SPREADS EVERYWHERE
BIGGEST YEAR IN CARS
SINCE 1955

While we were in the hotel room with Ann-Margret (she was about to do a big show at Radio City Music Hall), she got up and moved across the room, and we got the same feeling we got looking at that issue of *Life*. We told her that we did.

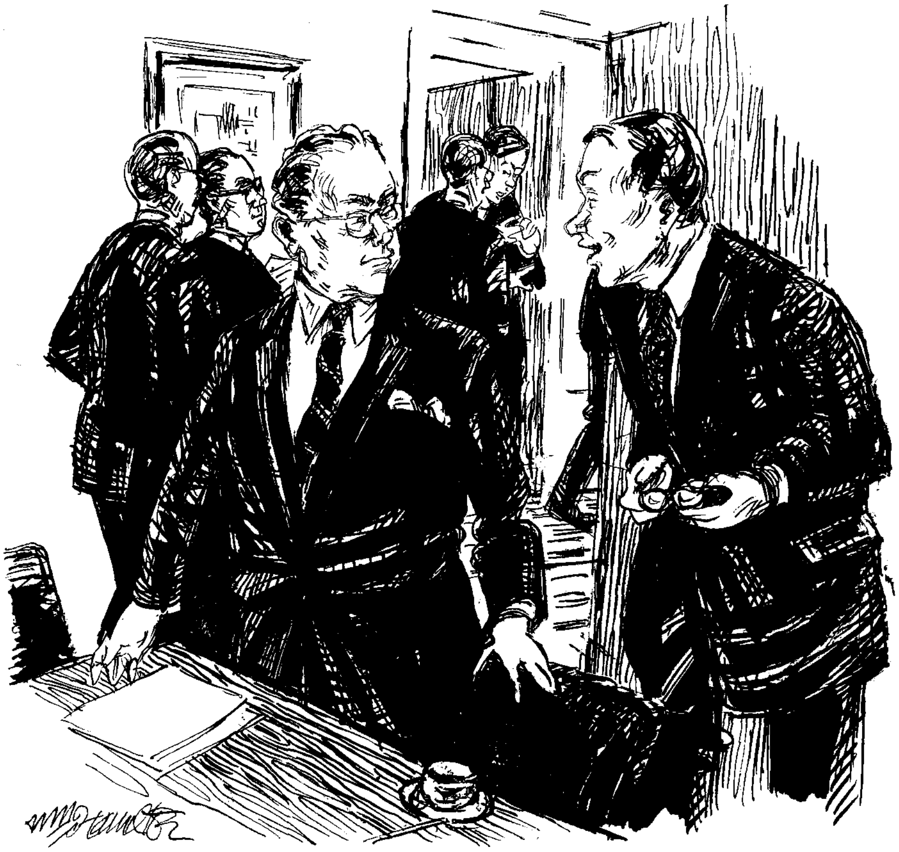
"I was the new girl then," Ann-Margret said. "I was thrilled—jubilant—doing that."

We asked her how she had dealt with the idea of putting herself back together after she fell off the stage in Lake Tahoe.

"It was very simple," she said. She said this the way a general in the Army would say it. She looked straight through us. She went right on talking. She said, "I thought, If I get myself all gussied up maybe I can look nice, pulled together. When I was little, they said, 'What a nice little girl,' 'What a talented little girl,' 'What a polite little girl.' Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes." We didn't quite know what she meant



"Your Honor, we the jury blame the victim."



"I think we'd be lucky to have you taking over even if you weren't untainted."

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by "Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes," but we didn't dare ask. Ann-Margret saying "Yes" four times in a row is in itself a spin to stardom.

We looked at Ann-Margret. We started with the clothes and the jewelry. She was wearing several gold chains around her neck, and a diamond cross, and bright gold earrings almost in the shape of hearts. She wore three rings. One was a huge, pear-shaped diamond. She wore a bulky sweater. She looked like a very pretty big little girl.

"Roger said everything was going to be O.K.," she said. "I had roast beef through a straw." She smiled and then yelled to Roger Smith, who was in the next room, "Roger, honey, what was that thing you brought me?" He said something we didn't hear. She turned to us. "I drank Caesar salad through a straw," she said.

We saw Ann-Margret's show at Radio City. At one moment, she wore a royal-blue dress that sparkled and revealed one leg in a clear nylon stocking. At intermission, we wandered around trying to overhear what people were saying about her. "That was beau-dee-ful," a man in a green-colored suit said.

"I would have been out of breath, but she wasn't—not a doll like her," a middle-aged woman said to her friend, also a middle-aged woman.

"She's feminine," a man said seriously, as though he were assessing a stock and giving it a "buy" recommendation.

For a couple of weeks after the Radio City show, Ann-Margret kept on surfacing in our thoughts. Not incongruously, she was linked in our mind with the word "glow." We kept seeing an old car—some old American bomb, five hundred horsepower, deteriorating rust-pocked body, defiant folks at the wheel—and we kept thinking about "GLOW FROM DETROIT SPREADS EVERYWHERE—BIGGEST YEAR IN CARS SINCE 1955." We also kept reading and reading *Life* of January 11, 1963. There are two great pictures in that issue. One is the cover, of course. The other is of a man called Arnold Klett, of Detroit, Michigan. Mr. Klett has an almost diabolical look on his face. He is deliriously happy, but not in the same way as Ann-Margret is. He is an automobile dealer. In the picture, he is surrounded by model cars. The headline around Mr. Klett is "BOOM . . . IN DETROIT."

We have been thinking that Ann-Margret is probably in better shape than the automobile industry, and the reason has to do with the quality of her smile. We wonder if there isn't a clue in the word "jubilant." No one who has been jubilant can really fail. Booms in Detroit are another matter.

Unsolicited

THE other day, the phone rang and a voice that sounded distinctly like a voice of the people asked, "Is this *The New Yorker*?"

"Yes, it is," we said.

"This is Rick Santorum's office," the voice said. "Congressman Rick Santorum, of the Eighteenth Congressional District, in suburban Pittsburgh. One of our constituents asked that we look into the whereabouts of a manuscript he sent you, in good faith, for your perusal. He hasn't heard from you in some time, and would like to have his manuscript returned to him now, please."

We explained that this magazine receives about a thousand unsolicited manuscripts a week, or fifty thousand a year. We try to respond quickly, but sometimes the mails swallow an envelope, or a manuscript mysteriously files itself behind a desk. Usually, it resurfaces sooner or later.

The voice said that it would report back to the angry constituent, and added, "In all likelihood, you'll hear from me again."

We were chastened, but only for a minute. Then we felt flattered, uplifted, patriotic. For the first time in our history, perhaps in all literary history, the United States Government had come to the aid of an anxious author—a member of a downtrodden minority, if ever there was one. At a time when term-limit propositions are turning up on many ballots, and when public confidence in our elected officials may be drooping to an all-time low, we had just found a politician to cheer for. We support Rep. Santorum (R., Pa.) to the hilt. We support him for senator in 1992. We support him for President in 1996. Vote Santorum!

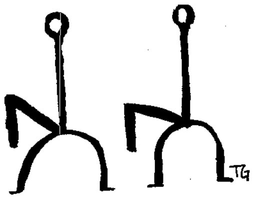
THAT'S NO FUN

WE were on our way to have dinner with our friends who lived in the woods. They didn't live out in the woods—just raw woods—the way elves do, they lived in a house in the woods of Southampton.

"You know I hate the woods," I had to say to my husband whenever he tried to get me to walk in various woods with him. He'd ask, "How can you hate woods if you love nature?" and I'd explain, "I like light, open fields and wild moors, not dark, closed woods." My husband had resentfully compiled a list of wooded places I had refused to walk in with him over the years. "The pine forest in Nantucket, the woods all over Maine, Nova Scotia, France, and Italy." Just as he had compiled a list of movies I'd prevented him from seeing after movies had gotten to be so bad. "When the Oscars are announced I haven't seen any of the movies," he complained to an intellectual filmmaker who was our friend. "You're lucky," the filmmaker said to him. Then he looked at me with admiration.

My husband had such a poor memory for other things, but as for these wooded areas, he was able to remember every one and list them bitterly whenever the subject came up. He said he didn't want to walk alone in the woods. He'd say, "You would love it so much if you would just try it." He'd promise that we would come across rare birds and flowers.

There were times when he had tricked me into walking in the woods by promising that there was only a short wooded area that led to a wide-open space—the water and the sky. On one of these walks I pointed to a man coming toward us wearing a camouflage outfit and carrying a bow and arrow in a case. "Look," I said, "a hunter with a weapon."



"It's not a weapon," my husband said. "It's some kind of binocular equipment."

"What about the camouflage?"

"He doesn't want to frighten away the birds he's trying to see."

The second one of these guys we passed had his bow and arrow out of his binocular case.

"What are you hunting?" I asked him in a friendly way.

"Deer," he said. "But they're getting away."

"Is it safe for us to be walking here?"

"We're pretty well sure of our target before we shoot," he said with a big grin.

I had seen deer hunters like these on the news explaining how they happened to kill this or that person walking nearby.

"They're way over there," he said, pointing to a spot a few feet away from where we were standing.

This would be a good way for my husband to get rid of me, I thought as we left the woods that day. But no matter how many woods I had kept him from walking in, it couldn't be reason enough to hire a hunter for murder.

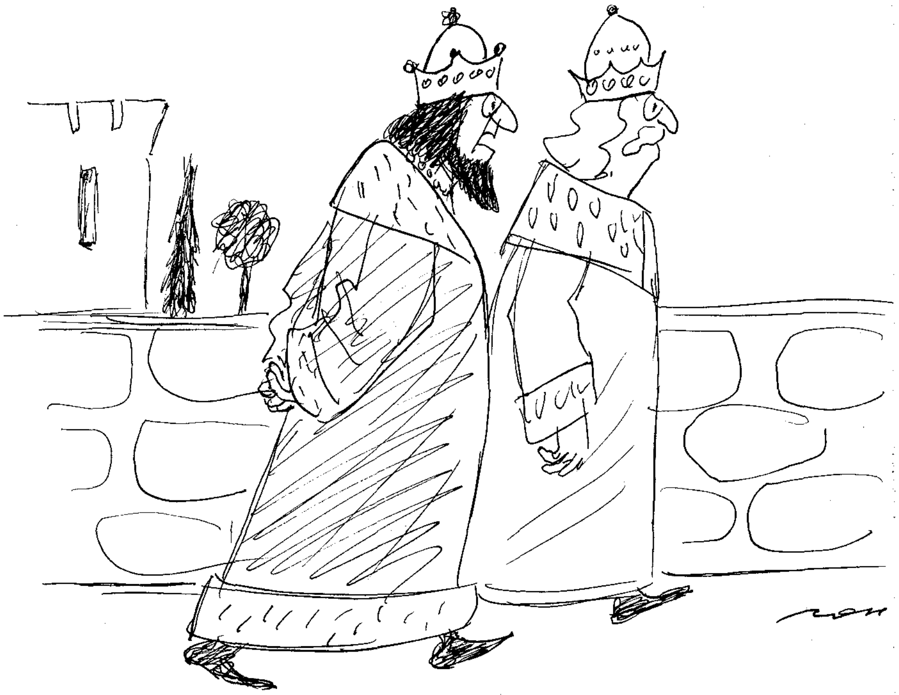
On this night, preparing to visit our friends in the woods, I had offered to bring a few things for the dinner. I had done this for two reasons. One: It was the au-pair girl's day off. That meant our friends had spent the whole day alone with their three babies, all boys under four, and they would be too glum to cook. Two: Even when they were in the right mood to cook, they cooked only inedible things. Because the wife of the couple was Swedish, she had Swedish ideas of what to eat. Once, this is what was spread out on the table: a platter of meatballs, gravlax, five cheeses—a few were the kind with mold—hard-boiled eggs, butter, bread, and sliced pickles. Finally I had to eat a piece of bread and some pickles, but this was out of politeness, not hunger.

The mother of the Swedish wife was visiting, and during the so-called meal she got up and made an omelette as her contribution to the dinner. She must have felt she had to do something, because she spoke almost no English and could do nothing but smile pleasantly when the conversation around her was not in Swedish. Sometimes her daughter would explain something to her in Swedish and she would smile and say "Ya." This was O.K. with me—I could sit back all night and hear them talk Swedish to each other without understanding a word. But some words were almost the same as English words, and I was forced to understand them. For example, "*klocka*" meant "clock." These words were like parodies of English and reminded me of an actual parody I'd seen of an Ingmar Bergman film, or of all his films. It was pleasant for me to listen to these conversations translated into Swedish, and after a while I'd feel that I could float outside the conversation and not have to be part of it. Whatever they were saying sounded so much better in Swedish than when I'd heard it in English.

When I first saw this meal of all animal fat and animal protein I remembered hearing that in Denmark this is what people ate. A friend had told me that the Danish people she saw everywhere on her visit to that country all had rosy cheeks and high blood pressure from their diet of butter, cheese, and meat. Although I had not heard this about the Swedish people, ignorance of Scandinavia, as well as of most other parts of the world, led to my lumping countries all together regarding dietary preferences. I knew that the Swedes liked to commit suicide, and if this was their diet, maybe it was the reason.

If our friends, this couple, ever prepared a vegetable, it would be a nightshade vegetable on some macrobiotic list of "Never Eat"; for example, eggplant, peppers, potatoes, or tomatoes. They soaked these vegetables in oil, usually Bertolli olive oil from a plastic bottle, and then they grilled them. As a variation from the nightshades they might serve asparagus, from the "Avoid" list. They were all screwed up this way, and so was their refrigerator. Almost everything in there was in a plastic bottle. Almost everything else was in a plastic wrapper—chicken, meat, and cheese would come tumbling forth from every shelf when I opened the door to look for some Perrier. But there never was any Perrier, and only once was there Pellegrino. Their twenty-month-old boy sat on my lap that time and said, "More Pellegrino, please," almost every minute. This was the only time I got any Pellegrino—when I shared a glass with this baby boy. Other times I'd have to go to our car in their wooded driveway and get my own bottle of water from the back seat. "Sorry, we have no water for you," they'd say, "but we forget you don't drink wine."

This time I had offered to bring the salad, and when I pictured their olive oil I made some salad dressing, too. When I remembered their idea of vegetables I offered to cook broccoli a way it was served in an Italian restaurant where the chef liked to cook as if he were in Tuscany, although he came from Brooklyn.



"I hear Midas is putting everything into gold."

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WHILE I was washing the leaves of three kinds of lettuce and steaming the broccoli, my husband sat in his chair watching television and switching around to all the channels in his favorite pursuit—seeing what else is on. Although he knows how much I hate the sound of this activity, he keeps on doing it. He really began to get on my nerves when he stood at the door doing nothing while I tried to put all the food into shopping bags with a bunch of white tulips I had decided to bring. "Maybe you could help me carry some of this," I said.

One reason I was afraid to visit the couple was their children. We might feel bad when we saw them because we hadn't managed to have a child yet, or we might feel good because these half-Swedish babies were especially adorable, but then that would quickly make us feel bad again. One boy was really a baby and still seemed surprised to have been born. He had a big red face, as big as a balloon, with lots of black hair going in all directions. Sometimes I'd try to rearrange his hair, and when I told him how it looked he'd laugh. "Now it's like Tom Snyder," I'd tell him.

This was part of his charm—he'd laugh at everything. "Doesn't he look like a fat old lady in a housedress in Appalachia?" I asked on one visit. The baby's parents took this to be a compliment, which it certainly was. His eyes were such a light blue that he had a really Christian look, as if his ancestors had run after and thrown rocks at Jews, although I knew this was impossible because he was Swedish, not Polish, and the Swedes were so tolerant of minorities and so perfect in every way. Mai Britt had married Sammy Davis, Jr. That was an example often given of Swedish liberalism, I recalled, or maybe it wasn't—it was an example of something, I couldn't remember what, as I looked at this baby's light-blue eyes and tried to picture his ancestors. His name happened to be Christian, too—a choice I couldn't understand, because his father was half Jewish, and it was almost like being named Jesus.

If he were my baby I would have named him Tubby. My husband had a list of nicknames he said he wished he'd been called, so I knew he'd go along with this. On his list were: Butch, Chick, Jumbo, Slim, Slick, and Jinx. In my childhood I'd actually known a boy named Tubby—not a very nice boy. At a birthday party for his little sister, Irma—he was nine at the time—he'd done a magic trick, and the trick involved something like putting pepper on a handkerchief, which caused my older sister to sneeze. My sister could not forgive Tubby for this, saying that it wasn't funny, or magic, and that it was dangerous to cause sneezing fits in others, especially an other like her. She was so sensitive to various allergens that in later years she developed cat asthma, a condition not taken seriously by most people but acknowledged by the reproductive surgeon I'd consulted and photographed, Dr. Arnold Loquesto, when I removed a cat from my chair at a dinner party at the house of another surgeon because of my own allergy. "Cat asthma!" he said enthusiastically. "We'll have to perform an emergency tracheotomy."

"Here, use this," I said, offering him a silver letter opener his wife had just given the hostess as a house gift. "Here, use this!" was my favorite line of dialogue from a movie ever since I had first seen Loretta Young say it to Orson Welles when she realizes that he is Franz Kindler, the Nazi monster she has unknowingly married in the film "The Stranger" and hands him a fire poker to use to kill her. "When you kill me, don't put your hands on me!" she says. "Here—use this!"

When I first looked at the baby, Christian, whom I could never call by his name—a name his older brothers could not pronounce, calling him Tintin instead—I wondered how Tubby had liked being called Tubby. His parents owned a run-down boatyard next to a creek. They all lived in a white stucco house with red trim. It looked like a house on a Christmas card and not in the real world. His father was known as "old man Reilly," and his mother looked like a worn-out Peggy Wood in the TV program "I Remember Mama."

I thought that hearing children pronounce names wrong was a good reason to try to have a child. Also, when they're older they can show us how to use electronic equipment. I should proceed with the project at the hands of Dr. Loquesto no matter how repugnant and unnatural his schemes of reproduction sounded. If he said, "Go in the other room and wait while I wash the sperm," I should do so, not ask to watch and to photograph the washing process. In my work I had recently gotten the idea to photograph any activity I didn't understand.

The other thing I was afraid of—*in addition to the food and the children*—was that there would be no real dinnertime conversation. I tried to remember what a conversation was. What is a conversation was something I had to wonder when we were dining with certain people, or almost all people. The last true conversation I'd had was with Dr. Loquesto's eleven-year-old son. Whenever he said "Why?" he said the word as if he wanted to know the answer really badly. He had an opinion about everything that came up—usually a low opinion.

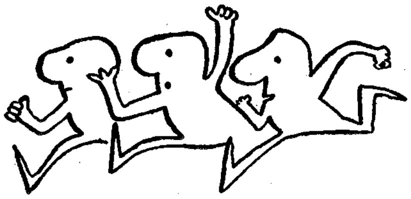
But the half-Swedish couple did not ask why or have ideas about subjects that came up. Subjects kind of came and went. What was it like when we weren't there—with their more compatible friends? Once or twice we were there with these friends, but because we were there, too, it put a damper on the compatibility of the thing. The dinner passed as a blurred long moment or two. At the end of the dinner a male guest got up from his seat, picked up a whole pint of ice cream, and ate it all down in a few big spoonfuls. And I hadn't seen or smelled marijuana being smoked.

I couldn't remember having been present in any dining room lately when there was a conversation, and I didn't even know what one was anymore. Just as I didn't know what a tomato was anymore. I'd see one and I'd want it. Then I'd cut into it, and when I saw those seeds and that juice I'd think, "What is a tomato? Does anyone really know?" Then I'd eat it anyway.

IN the car on the way to the woods, I held the tulips in one hand and the salad dressing in the other. We drove in silence down the dismal road that led to the woods. "We hate where our house is," the couple would say frequently. "We like our house but we hate getting there." They had given me a new idea for my work—to film people in their houses telling what they didn't like about them.

"You have to pass the dump," the Swedish wife would say whenever the subject came up. Since they had to pass the dump, they could have gone in and recycled all their plastic bottles. But they didn't. The one advantage of proximity to the dump was overlooked by the couple, who bought every product available in plastic and then tossed the empty plastic bottles into a plastic bag filled with good garbage that should have gone into a compost heap, which they didn't have. Another advantage of living in the woods—ease of keeping a compost heap hidden somewhere behind a pine tree.

The last place I had seen carbonated beverages in plastic bottles was in the refrigerator of the reproductive surgeon, Dr. Loquesto, and I had never got over this sight. Now, I knew that the couple never read the *Times* and rarely watched CNN. The doctor always read the *Times* and watched all the news, and when he missed articles about plastic in the food supply I sent them to him. Because the doctor was in his forties, he had a basic education that could be added to. But the husband and wife were in their thirties and had to be completely educated whenever anything came up.



It was getting harder and harder to be friends with couples under forty. Some of these people owned no books. Others didn't care about Mozart or Elvis Presley. When I saw the couple's new house completed—they had designed and built it themselves and had actually chosen the woods for the site—I saw that there were no bookshelves. I said, "Where will the bookshelves go?" The husband looked startled, not because he'd forgotten about shelves in his building plan but because he realized they had no books.

"That's O.K.," he said, calming himself quickly. "We'll find a place."

He knew how to be calm, and secure, too, because he had once taken a course (in California, naturally) that taught people how to be whatever they already were—I *think*, because usually I lost consciousness when he explained what the course was about. It sounded close to a Scientology or est course I'd heard described by some course survivors on a television program about these things. The husband's ability to remain calm was one of the reasons we became friends with him—a poor reason, on second thought.

THE PHANTOM AGENTS

We need more data re our example, Earth—how it would behave in a
crisis, under pressure,
or simply on a day no one had staked out for unrest
to erupt. What season would fit its life style
most naturally? Who would the observers, the control group be?

For this we must seek the answer in decrepit cinemas
whose balconies were walled off decades ago: on the screen
(where, in posh suburbia, a woman waits),
under the seats, in the fuzz and ancient vomit and gum wrappers;
or in the lobby, where yellowing lobby cards announce
the advent of next week's Republic serial—names
of a certain importance once, names that float
in the past, like a drift of gnats on a summer evening.

Who in the world despises our work
as much as we do? I was against campaigning again,
then my phone started ringing off the hook. I tell you . . .
But to come back to us, sanded down to the finer grain
and beyond—this is what books teach you, but also
what we must do. Make a name, somehow,
in the wall of clouds behind the credits, like a
twenty-one-vehicle pileup on a fog-enclosed highway.
This is what it means to be off and running, off
one's nut as well. But in a few more years,
with time off for good behavior . . .

—John Ashbery

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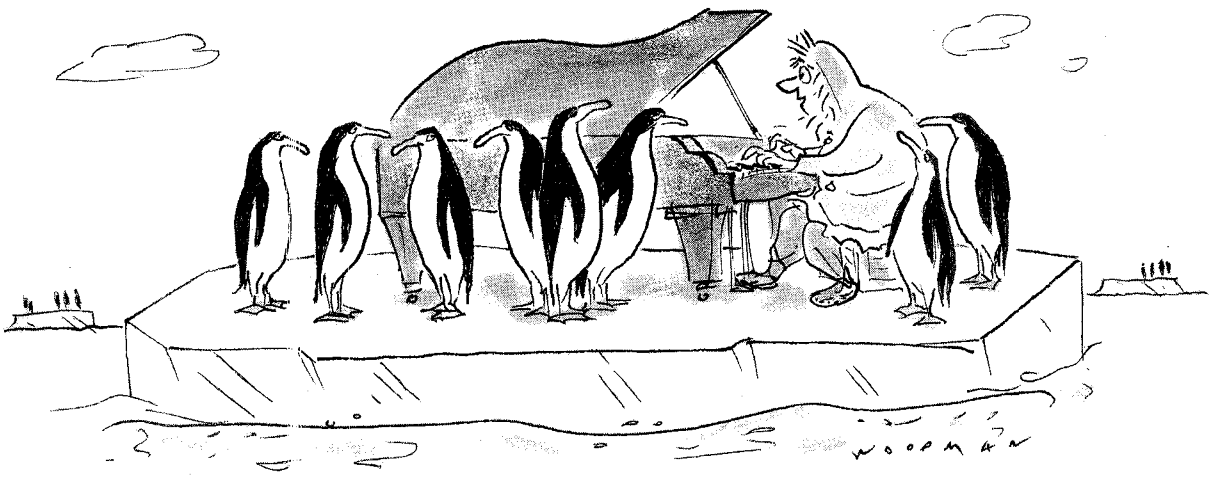

"What's it all about, Alfie?"

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Because we'd tell him something like this: "The temperature of the earth has gone up four degrees in this decade." And he'd say, "Hey, no big deal, we'll all get central air-conditioning."

The last time we knew some couples born in the decade after ours, I saw that they were in a whole society of couples who spoke this way. When the men greeted each other in the street or in a restaurant they'd say, "Hey, what's happening?" and the answer was usually "Hey," because what could be happening? These men would grin in genuine happiness at seeing each other, and in confirmation of a bond of emptiness between them.

I thought these things over as we drove through the woods. I felt foolish holding that bottle of salad dressing and those white tulips. I had made the dressing in a bottle I'd saved from Israeli tomato juice. Although I knew that tomatoes were from an extremely yin nightshade plant, I still had the desire for them. I had a lingering fear of Israeli tomatoes and oranges, having once heard that Arab terrorists threatened to inject them with cyanide, but I was in the mood to live dangerously the day I bought that bottle of juice.

I had also brought along my house shoes, because in Sweden, as well as in Japan, people took off their outside shoes and put on their inside shoes before entering a house. I thought this was an excellent custom, and my husband said he thought so, too, but in our house he preferred to walk right in wearing his outside shoes. I was able to sling the back straps of my indoor shoes over my fingers and carry the shopping bags of food and flowers at the same time. What was my husband planning to carry? A sack of wine—a crate of wine, a barrel of some alcoholic brew—would be his addition to any dinner. I knew that he and our host would soon be slugging some down. Our hostess, too.

THE husband and wife were sitting together in a corner of their dark living room and didn't get up to let us in. We had to let ourselves in. Their almost-three-year-old boy came to the door when he heard us open it. He said something to me in Swedish before taking the tulips and running over to his mother.

"Why does he speak to me in Swedish?" I asked. "I never know what he's saying."

"He thinks all women speak Swedish," the husband said. "You look more Swedish than his mother does," he added, looking at his red-haired, brown-eyed wife.

"No, she looks more Finnish," the wife said, giving me a critical look.

The boy came back and put a big book in front of my face. "Look, my new book—read it," he said.

I was preparing myself for another dull children's book when I saw that I was looking at something really beautiful. Not only that, but the words on the cover were Swedish and I didn't have to know what they meant. One word was "*äventyr*," and in the way I understood some Swedish words to be almost English I thought it meant "adventure." In the picture were what looked like giant-sized blueberry trees with butterflies flying and bees buzzing around them. The blue of the blueberries was so blue—bluer than a real blueberry—and the background behind the trees and the leaves was a soft green, not the deep, dark green of a real forest.

"What is this beautiful book?" I asked.

"It's Swedish—it's mine from my childhood," the wife said, pronouncing it "shildhood." "Isn't it wonderful?"

And I remembered quickly that everything in Sweden was wonderful, and that this was going to be another opportunity to hear how perfect everything was in Sweden. But this was fine with me. I was as patriotic as the next person, the kind of patriot who doesn't mind hearing how much better things are in Scandinavia. But if things are so great in Sweden, I always wondered, what are all these Swedish women doing here? Sometimes I'd ask this question. When I tried to remember the answer it was something vague like "It's more interesting" or "There's no future in Sweden."

Under the blueberry trees, which appeared to be the size of apple trees, there were two perfect spiderwebs, and inside each web was a spider. On both sides of each tree there was a large bumblebee, and above one bee, near the berries, there was a giant, pale-golden butterfly.

"Who illustrated this book—van Gogh?" I asked.

"No, the writer illustrated it. Isn't it wonderful?"

The little boy was standing at my side trying to open the book, so I had to proceed. I was staring at the blue of the berries as I heard the two husbands and the wife plan the start of the drinking. They were discussing which wine to begin with. These two men had spent a year trying to buy a winery in California, and when the plan fell through they ended up just drinking a lot of wine.

I'd like to get right inside this picture, I thought. I'd like to be underneath these big blueberry trees.

"Read," the boy said.

"O.K.," I said, "but I don't read Swedish. I'll try to figure it out from the pictures. A boy is walking through a beautiful forest. It's so beautiful—it's in Sweden, not the kind we're in now."

"That's right," his mother said, laughing. "In Sweden the forests are so beautiful. They're not just woods."

"For some reason the boy is sitting on a tree stump crying as he talks to a tiny elf," I said.

"Why is he crying?" he asked.

"I don't know, because I can't understand any of the words."

I turned to the next page, where an animal looking like something in between a squirrel and a rabbit had a blueberry basket on its back.

"What's that?" the boy asked.

"The ears are too long for a squirrel. What is this animal?" I asked his mother.

"It's—how do you say?—it's—you know—a squirrel. But it's the kind we have only in Sweden—this beautiful, light-brown—like a deer—not gray like here. They're so cute, with these big ears. I think it's a squirrel—no—yes, a squirrel."

For a minute I thought she was going to come up with a whole other kind of animal, but this was just as good—a better kind of squirrel. The boy had run off and gotten onto a little plastic tricycle, which he was riding around the room.

"Come back," I said. "The boy and the elf are in the forest now."

I decided to read on. Soon, adorable little boys, dressed in blueberry costumes, were in a field of blueberry trees in front of a thatched hut.

The corks were popping and the wine tasting had begun. The wife was in on it and seemed too tired to get up for the hors d'oeuvres, if there were any. I saw that she had regained her pre-childbirth figure and was wearing tight bluejeans and a black turtleneck sweater. The husband was wearing black slacks and a black sweater, too.

"You're both in black," I said.

"Yeah, well, we're idiots," the husband said.

"It's the Roy Orbison look," my husband said.

"We didn't plan it—it just happened," the husband said. "And you're both in beige."

"You have a black Saab," I said.

"That was a real mistake," he said. "I couldn't wait for a good color. But, hey, you have a beige Volvo."

The blueberry boys had climbed into the trees and were pulling down berries and throwing them into one boy's blue cap.

The husband was talking about some power tool, and soon they'd be discussing how big a hole to dig for a certain size post.

"I just can't understand what's happening in this story," I said to the wife.

"See," she said, finally getting up and coming over to show me the pictures in the book, "The boy is crying because he's sent into the woods to find blueberries and he can't find any."

"Who's this elf?"

"That's the Blueberry Father, and he comes to help the boy. He shrinks the boy down so they can go into the blueberry bushes. Here the boy is all shrunk down in the forest, and these are the Blueberry Boys. See the little blue hats? They're dressed as blueberries, and they're sailing in this shell of a nut."

"Oh, now I see. That's why everything is so big. What is this beautiful red fruit?"

"Those are lingonberries," she said, leaning over and smiling. "This is the Lingonberry Mother. She has with her the Lingonberry Girls, and the Blueberry Father has the boys."

"This was before the feminist era," I said.

"This book is so old, you know. They have these lingonberries in Sweden, fresh lingonberries with cream—they're so delicious, just picked in the season."

The word "lingonberry" sounded so beautiful to me in this Swedish accent. Lingonberry.

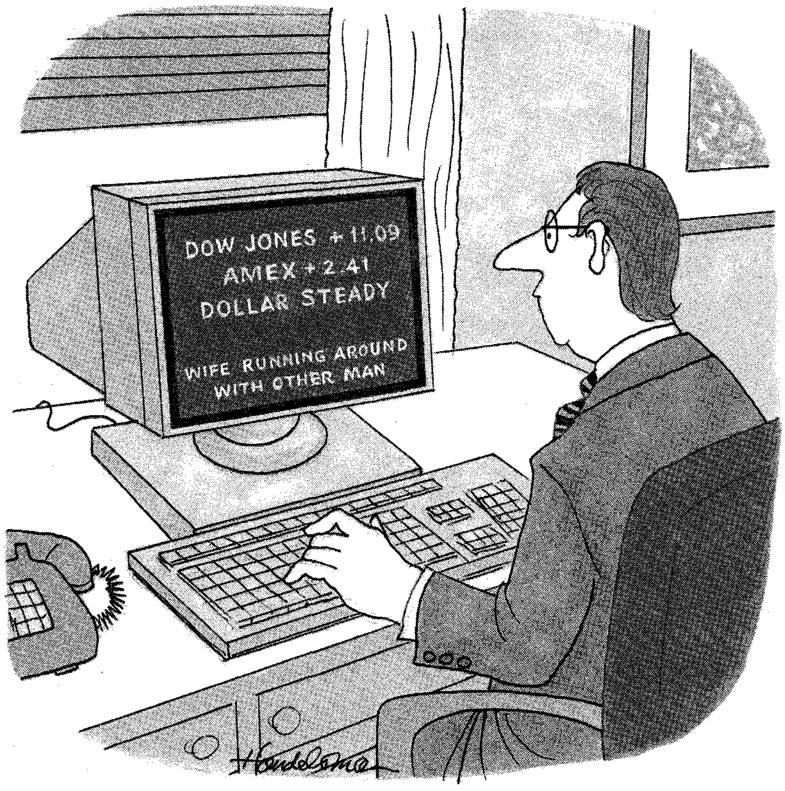
"This is the most beautiful book I've ever seen," I said, thinking I sounded drunk, though the real drunkards were talking business soberly.

"You see, then the Blueberry Boys and the Lingonberry Girls all meet in the forest with the little boy, and they eat the berries at this picnic."

This was not the way my mother or father read stories to me. They were never drunk, they didn't wear bluejeans, they didn't wear black to read fairy tales.

If I were this lovely Swedish woman I could never leave a country where an author had produced such a work of art, a country where people sat in fields and ate blueberries and lingonberries out of wooden bowls.

"I have more books by this author," she said, handing me a brownish book. On the



cover there was a picture of some tiny boys in round, red caps climbing on what looked like a mold-covered rock. But inside I saw that the boys were in a field of man-size mushrooms. “Giant mushrooms,” I said. “The writer is preoccupied with one theme.”

“These are the little mushroom boys—they’re from a mushroom family who live in the mushroom woods. This was my favorite book.”

“Are there any homeless people and filthy streets in Sweden?” I said.

“No, we don’t have anything like that there. In the countryside people do these things—they pick mushrooms and berries and have picnics.”

“I see a girl flying through the air on a little bat—that’s going too far,” I said, closing the book. “One thing I can’t face is the idea of a bat.”

“In Sweden the bats are different. They’re not big and black and scary.”

“Do they have rabies in Sweden?”

“I never heard of it in modern times.”

“Why don’t we all live in Sweden?” I said to everyone.

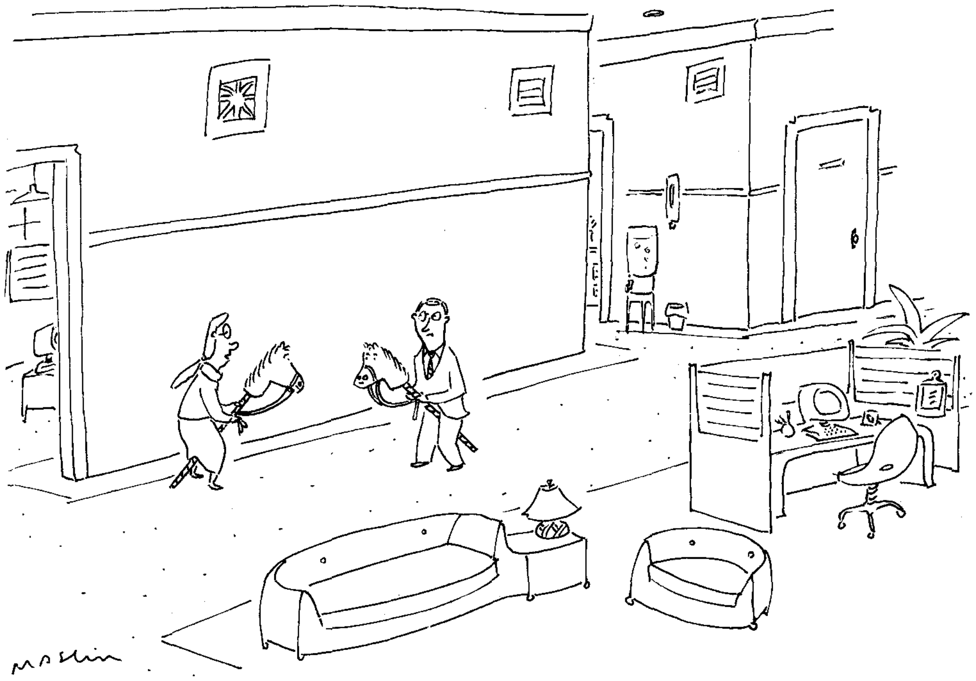
“We always ask you to come with us,” the wife said.

“If I weren’t afraid of airplanes I’d go to the Salzburg Festival,” I said. “I’d like to fly over on one of those pleasant little Swedish bats you have.”

“I’m ready to take a plane,” my husband said.

“Hey,” the other husband said.

They picked up their wineglasses and toasted the idea. My husband would toast any idea.



“Oh, Mr. Benson—you ride, too!”

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SOON we were all in the modern Swedish kitchen trying to do a few things. The husband started to throw some asparagus into a pan of water. “Wait—I haven’t washed them yet,” I said.

“Wash them?” he said. “Hey, good idea. But you don’t eat asparagus anyway, right?”

“I don’t want my friends to eat DDT.”

“Hey, alcohol kills things,” he said.

“Alcohol doesn’t kill pesticides,” I said.

“It must kill some things,” he said.

“It kills humans,” I said.

“For thousands of years man has drunk wine,” my husband said drunkenly.

“ ‘Alcohol is a toxic drug, stronger than heroin’—I just read that,” I said.

“Don’t quote from that Michio Kushi book,” my husband said.

“No, this is from a doctor who graduated from Harvard Medical School. You can believe someone like that.”

“I do believe it,” my husband said, taking a big gulp of wine.

“Wouldn’t you like anything to drink?” the wife asked me. “I’m sorry we have no Perrier again.” She bent down to search in a cabinet and came up saying, “Here, I want you to have this,” the way someone gives away a precious family heirloom. In her hand was a small jar of sliced pickles.

“My favorite food,” I said.

“They’re Swedish, from Ikea. We got the shrimp there, too.”

“Oh, no—I forgot to defrost the shrimp,” the husband said. “Oh, well, I’ll make spaghetti. Everyone loves tomato sauce.”

“What kind of pickles are they?” I asked as I tried to read the Swedish ingredients.

“Normal pickles,” the wife said. “How do you say it? Taste them, they’re delicious.”

“If I taste one, I might have to eat them all.”

“And you’re not even pregnant,” the wife said.

“What are these Swedish shrimp like?” I asked. I wanted to know, because every time shrimp were mentioned, the wife said that she ate shrimp only in Sweden.

“I can’t describe it,” she answered. “Once you have them, you can never want to have shrimp here.”

“You mean shellfish are cleaner in Sweden?” I said.

“Of course they are,” she said. “The rivers are clear and blue.”

“Shrimp are from the ocean, I thought,” the husband said.

“The oceans are cleaner, too,” she said.

“You mean they don’t dump everything into the ocean? What kind of water-treatment program do they have?” I said.

In my childhood, when I envisioned the life of a grownup, I never thought I would grow up to ask the question “What kind of water-treatment program do they have in Sweden?” To me, an example of things grownups did was this: one night when my parents went to the theatre in New York, my mother wore a black taffeta dress and a tiny black sequinned hat. When she came home she said that she had met the actress Ruby Dee, and Ruby Dee had admired her hat, so she took it off and gave it to her. That’s what I thought grownups did when they went out for the evening. Whenever I see Ruby Dee I wonder whether she still has my mother's hat.

EVENTUALLY the dinner was ready and on the table. The table was really set, unlike our table, where things are thrown on at the last moment. The little boy didn't want to go to bed and was being allowed to sit with us. The other diners quickly or slowly became engaged in a conversation about their wines of the evening.

"A nice Chablis," the husband said.

"A great Chablis," my husband said. I *never* heard *anyone swallow so* loudly.

"Very fine," the other one said, swishing some around in his mouth like mouthwash.

Soon the wife joined in with some compliments of her own. "It is good," she said with a dazed look on her face.

Then they started a bottle of red wine. The cat jumped up onto a chair next to mine and looked right into my eyes. I picked up a spoon and touched the fur with it. "I can't touch you," I said to the cat.

"Get him to move," the wife said. "Come here, Ingmar," she called. The cat jumped up into her lap.

"I like his company," I said. "Even though his fondest wish is to kill and eat birds."

"I eat birds, too," the wife said in her charming accent.

"You don't pounce on them and kill them in your garden."

"You know, I love to eat little ducks," she said.

"It must be hard for you to be a macrobiotic vegetarian," her husband said to me.

Suddenly I noticed that no one was eating the salad or the Tuscan broccoli. Instead, they were eating creamed potatoes and some gravlax that had been added to the meal to make up for the shrimp.

"This is a typical Swedish meal," the wife said. "Creamed potatoes and gravlax."

"Have some salad," I said. "I made the dressing the way the Tuscan-Brooklyn chef told me to."

"What's his secret?" the husband asked.

"Two secrets for everything," I said. "One is olive oil, the other is garlic. I poured off half the olive oil, because that chef weighs three hundred pounds."

"Where's the poured-off oil?" my husband asked.

"Here," the other husband said, passing the saucer of olive oil. "You can put some on the gravlax."

"Why don't you just pour it over everything?" I asked.

"Oops," the husband said. "I spilled a little on the chair."

"But my deerskin shirt is on that chair!" the wife said. "This is my best thing that I brought back from Sweden!"

"What's it doing on the chair?" her husband asked.

"I had no time today to pick up everything. Look, big stains of oil," she said, holding up her shirt. "There's no way to clean suède of something like this."

"This is your chance to give up wearing animal skin," I said.

"I eat it, I wear it," she said.

"We can cook the shirt and eat it," the husband said.

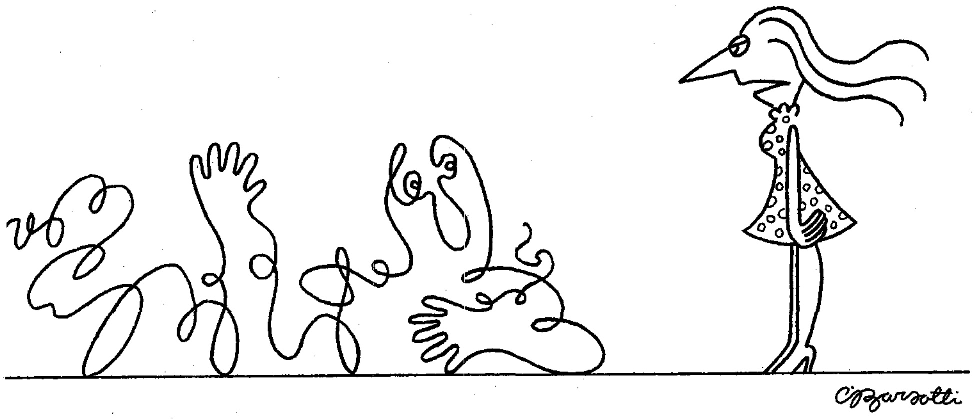
"I married this person?" the wife said.

"I bet there's some special Swedish method of cleaning it," I said.

"This could never happen in Sweden," the wife said with real sorrow.

"What a beautiful tablecloth," I said, hoping to cheer up my friend. "Is it Swedish?"

"Yes, I brought it back with me. I'm bringing my beautiful Swedish dowry—is that how you call it?—into our home where olive oil is spilled on my best suède clothing."



"Get the pliers yourself."

" 'Never marry for love,' my mother said," I said. " 'Money lasts but love doesn't.' This was her motto, but she figured it out too late."

"Kind of a cynical motto," the husband said.

"Her mother was cynical," my husband said.

"But she gave her hat to Ruby Dee," I said.

"Why did I ever get married?" the wife asked the cat as she looked into *his eyes.* "Even *you*, *you*'re a *man-cat.* I live with all men, why did I do this to my life?"

I saw that she had taken on a new, sultry quality I had never noticed before—she sounded just like Marlene Dietrich in "Shanghai Express."

"I'm going to make coffee and tea," the husband said. The two men walked into the kitchen in a spirit of camaraderie.

"They're going in there to encourage each other with their bad behavior," I said when they were gone. "We hear your drunken muttering," I called in to them.

"Why did I get married?" the wife said wretchedly. "I should have been a lesbian."

"No you shouldn't have!" I said. I was surprised.

"Could you open the cabinet and bring out the chocolate?" the wife asked me, pronouncing it "shocolate." She was slumped down in misery but still had enough life force to want the drug chocolate is known to be.

"Which do you want—the little candies or the giant bar?"

"Both," she said. "And could you get a sjar?"

"You don't mean this?" I asked, showing her a plain storage jar her husband had handed me. "You mean a bowl?"

"Yes, any bowl."

"Where did you get all this Swedish chocolate?" I asked.

"Ikea," she said, unwrapping one of the little candies and putting the red wrapper into her empty wineglass. "Taste them."

MY husband seemed to have suffered the most ill effects from the wine. When the evening began he looked like a fat-style Cary Grant, but as he drank more I caught him looking like Rodney Dangerfield. His eyelids were swollen, as if bees had stung them. Underneath the lids the eyes were red. His face had melted together and didn't seem to be his original face. The different parts of it were joining together in the middle, and his nose was spreading out like a pat of butter melting on a pancake. I imagined this buttery face on a baby.

"Well, I guess you can't always understand the things your wife wants you to," the husband said in a kind of summation of something, I couldn't tell what. I hadn't heard a discussion or anything that could be summed up.

"This is why women have to eat pickles and chocolates," I said to my dinner companions.

"Why?" my husband asked.

"Before I go back to Sweden I'll have to go to the sgym and do sit-ups," the wife said, looking at the wineglass filling up with red chocolate wrappers. "If we're killed in a plane crash, would you adopt our children?"

"We'll be killed on the Expressway first," I said.

"But we always fly to Sweden," she said.

"Then the whole family will be killed," her husband said reassuringly.

Soon the evening would end. I could look forward to the next day and another medical test in the laboratory of Dr. Loquesto. "By the way, when you had your cesarean did you have Demerol?" I asked the wife.

"Yes, in my veins, it was so wonderful. I was like, 'Give me more of that!' "

"Do you know whether Demerol pills work?"

"Sure, when they took away the I.V., I had pills. Why?"

"I have to have one of those tests tomorrow where they shoot dye through the fallopian tubes and take an X-ray. But I'm sure I don't have blocked tubes."

"Then why is your doctor doing the test?"

"He says he can't take my word for it. He'll be disappointed if they're not blocked."

"Why?"

"He loves to unblock tubes surgically."

"That's no fun."

"He says it's fun for him. Your doctor loves to do cesareans. They all have their favorite things."

"It was worth it for my three beautiful boys."

"He said he'd get me the fun radiologist," I said.

"Fun how?"

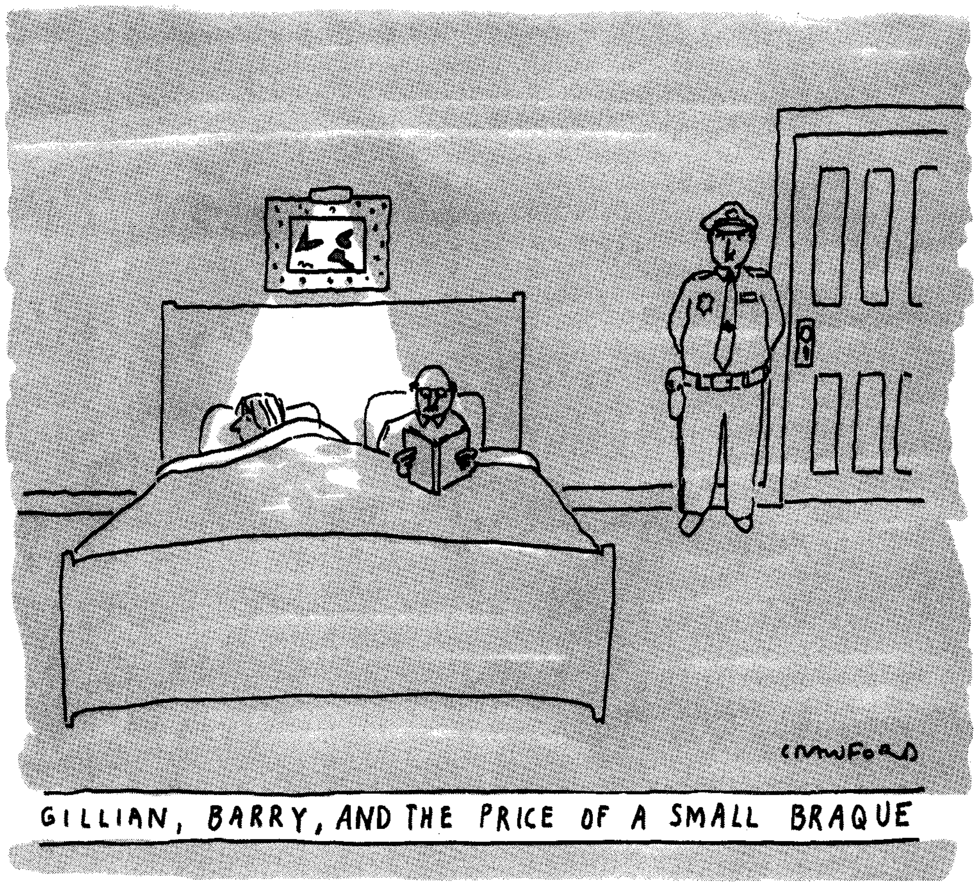
I thought about the surgeon and in what way the radiologist might be fun. Maybe it was a code word for sadist. I thought about the Demerol and made a plan to bring my Discman and two Mozart Piano Sonatas. Maybe I'd even bring "The Magic Flute," or "The Marriage of Figaro," which I had just purchased on three different recordings. I could take a Demerol, and a Xanax, too.

Some sort of conversation seemed to be starting again. Although the words were English, and I understand English, I couldn't tell what the conversation was about. It had to do with lumber. Moving lumber around.

I tried to think of something pleasant, in a really foreign language—like a Mozart opera. I saw a view of the future. I'd become an "all-Mozart opera lover." I'd go to meetings of partners of alcohol-dependent persons. The mother of a friend of ours joined Alcoholics Anonymous and liked it so much that she joined Schizophrenics Anonymous even though she wasn't a schizophrenic. Next, she met and married the seventy-year-old postmaster of Barnstable and had a child at the age of forty-four. "Anything is possible," Dr. Loquesto had told me when I mentioned this to him.

Maybe I could somehow get to the Salzburg Festival and go to a different opera each night, or, even better, go to the same ones over and over. Maybe I could photograph some musicians; often we find that great musicians and opera stars are plump. I could photograph them with their food supply and show them the road to macrobiotics. While engaged in this new project, I could find out what was on Schubert's mind when he wrote the "Trout" Quintet, and whether it was Mozart who really wrote it. Because how did Schubert all of a sudden get so happy? I thought about these projects, and then I thought of the Demerol and the Mozart and the doctor's disappointment at finding normal tubes. And I thought that except for his disappointment, hey, it might be fun.

—JULIE HECHT



GILLIAN, BARRY, AND THE PRICE OF A SMALL BRAQUE

PROFILES

OUTSIDER

I—THE GIFT

AP/Wide World Photos

LAST September, Jesse Jackson appeared with an assortment of other potential and declared Presidential candidates before a conclave of the Democratic National Committee in Los Angeles, and he largely shanghaied the event with a passionately rolling address that some political journalists there pronounced the most powerful they had ever heard him deliver. Afterward, a Party functionary “came up to me and said, ‘You have such a gift. Got this *gift*,’ ” Jackson reported. “I told him, ‘Well, why don’t you *use* that gift? You can try to cut me out if you want, but I’ll still be there. I’m not goin’ away. You can try to go around me, you can try to go under me—you *sho* can’t go over me, you know that. So why don’t you just bring me in?’ ” After long being regarded by Democratic curators as a kind of troublesome poltergeist in their midst, Jackson said that what he had in mind was simply an acceptance, an open embrace from the Party, “just for a start.”

In early November, though, Jackson announced that he would not be taking the field this time. Instead, he declared, he would set about mobilizing “a new, independent democratic majority” to open up the process from its domination by what had become the one party with “two names.” At the same time, he would be stepping up his political offensive to have the District of Columbia granted statehood. That mission, with the near-certainty that he would subsequently be elected one of its senators—he is now its so-called shadow senator—became all the more compelling once he had removed himself from the Presidential race and so risked receding into a middle distance of noticeability. Nevertheless, as he watched the other Democratic candidates forging on toward the primaries, he could not resist declaring publicly that he was satisfied that they were “basically environmentalists,” because “I’ve heard a lot of my speeches recycled.” Privately, he referred to them as “second-stringers.” A few days after his public withdrawal from the campaign, Jackson admitted, in a late-night phone call, “I have so much mixed emotions. But this campaign we on is eternal—it’s not captive to the schedules of Presidential political seasons.” Yet he still hopefully proposed, “What I’ve done is just shift from being chas*er* to chas*ee*. Now they gonna have to come to us. It’s all gonna position us so there can be no serious discussion about Vice-President without our being right at the center of it.” Earlier in the fall, he said, “If they think they gonna get me out of their hair, I’m *never* gonna get out of their hair. They didn’t put me in their hair in the first place, and they can’t get me out of it now. I’m unwashable, I’m unremovable. I’m gonna be in their hair as long as I live—be even more in their hair after I die.”

Well before Jackson’s announcement, many Democratic regulars and political commentators were suggesting, somewhat wishfully, that he was no longer a significant presence on the national political scene. Much was heard of the advent of a “post-Jackson” order of black politicians, like Virginia’s Governor Douglas Wilder, who were hailed as temperate, “mainstream” figures; in contrast to Jackson’s freebooting career, they had diligently worked their way up through the infrastructures of government. Even Georgia’s black congressman John Lewis, himself a veteran of the civil-rights struggles of the sixties, declared that “Jesse’s moment has passed.”

But pronouncing elegies about Jackson has proved a treacherous exercise. In 1984, when he came steaming virtually out of nowhere as a black social gospeller to make his first foray into the Democratic Presidential primaries, the venture was generally seen as whimsically implausible. Against that prevailing presumption, and despite certain staggering gaucheries he committed near the start, Jackson managed to collect twenty-one per cent of the total primary and caucus votes, which is to say some three and a half million votes altogether, and, out of the initial field of eight candidates, he pushed past five all the way to the Convention, behind only Walter Mondale and Gary Hart.

Even so, it was the conclusion of most political seers then that Jackson would turn out to have amounted to no more than what the columnist George

Will called “a comet hitting the earth’s atmosphere, burning brightly but fatally and soon to be a small cinder.” Yet in the next Presidential primary campaigns, in 1988, Jackson expanded his popular vote to some seven million, exceeded only by Governor Michael Dukakis’s ten million, and, as Jackson later liked to advertise, “more than any other second-place primary finisher in history.” This time, the tally included twelve per cent of the whites who voted—three times the number he had drawn in 1984. At one point, about midway through the nomination process, when he unexpectedly won the Michigan caucuses, he was for a heady moment actually considered the front-runner. Over all, he placed first in fourteen primaries and caucuses and second in thirty-six others, among them such overwhelmingly white states as Maine and Minnesota, and went into the Democratic National Convention, in Atlanta, where he delivered a memorable oration, with twelve hundred delegates—over a quarter of the total. That a flamboyant black activist initially regarded as a political novelty could proceed so far on little more than the heat of his message and his public persona was by any measure a remarkable feat of imagination and audacity over the heaviest tilt of circumstances. What has been left out of most computations of Jackson’s potential is “his extraordinary capacity for growth himself, personally,” the journalist David Halberstam has noted. “He’s the fastest study imaginable. The difference between how he ran in ’84 and how he ran in ’88 is just enormous—in maturity, sensitivity, his grasp of the big-theme issues. He just keeps on growing. That’s why, whenever you try to assess Jackson by what’s behind him, you’re going to miss him every time.”

After 1988, Jackson emerged as a figure who would ordinarily have been considered—if he had been anyone other than Jesse Jackson—among the more auspicious contenders for the nomination in 1992. Instead, the Party’s custodial establishment regarded him as a potential Robber Bridegroom far outside the nation’s conservative mainstream—an adventurer whose rowdy populist evangelisms could wreak havoc on the Party’s prospects. “If that’s the mainstream of people’s thinking in America, it’s ’cause of the absence of anything else around that’s dynamic and alive,” Jackson said. “It’s mainstream by default. Passive mainstream, negative mainstream. What leadership’s all about is bringing into being something that wasn’t there before. That’ll *always* radically change the chemistry of a situation.” Jackson’s ambition was to summon forth a mainstream of his own, to combine an assortment of minorities into a new national majority—what he called a Rainbow Coalition—made up not only of his already massive base among blacks but of struggling working families, liberal urbanites, Hispanics, women’s-rights groups, college students, environmentalists. However demographically diverse, this new popular front would have a common mood, Jackson said, of impatience with the mere maintenance politics of both the Bush Presidency and the Democratic leadership, and of readiness for adventure in “humanizing this society and our policies everywhere around the world.” Only through such a political new birth, Jackson preached, could the Democratic Party deliver itself out of its long impasse of a “competition of caution” with the Republicans. “Don’t nobody get moved by any milder, modified version of anything,” he warned. “People rather have fire on their hands or cold ice on their face than just warm spit down their neck. If people have to choose between the authentic and an imitation, they’ll choose the authentic every time.”

One needn’t be an admirer of Jackson’s to recognize that he is possibly the most original figure ever to have arrived at such an importance in the contest for the Presidency. He emerged as something like the Muhammad Ali of Presidential politics—not only in his fondness for prancing rhyme but as a spectacular and irrepressible virtuoso of ego. In one respect, he is another of those unruly populist outriders (William Jennings Bryan, Huey Long, George Wallace) who have periodically mounted raids into Presidential politics. But Jackson’s true ambition has always ranged beyond the merely political. When he was once asked whether he considered himself in a possible line of moral succession from Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr., he hesitated not an instant in replying, solemnly, “It’s what I aspire to.” He then added, “But I have an advantage they didn’t have. I have access to them in ways they didn’t have access to me.”

ANTIQUES
Eve Olitsky

If populism has classically been a movement of outsiders, probably none of the notable populist figures preceding Jackson ever came from quite so far outside. He was born, illegitimate, in the most impoverished pocket of the black quarter of Greenville, South Carolina; it was when he began to mount a voter-registration campaign among the poor and disenfranchised, in the summer of 1983, that he found that he was creating a substantial constituency of his own, which offered him an opening into a national arena otherwise completely closed to him. He would explain, “What I’m doing is carrying the moral vision of the civil-rights movement into the context of conventional politics.” But how Jackson differed from King was in seeking to become a part of the processes of power itself in order to realize that moral vision—a dubious transfer, perhaps, between two essentially alien mediums.

Jackson’s propensity for histrionic self-dramatizing has led many journalists and politicians alike to view him as self-obsessed, a ferocious opportunist, a towering humbug. Even his admirers acknowledge that he is a creature of hugely uneven parts—a mixture of the prodigiously gifted, the naïve, the rankly boorish, the bravely aspiring. Part of the press’s disaffection, too, is a virtual allergy to Jackson’s simple, tireless, almost abject eagerness for media notice, his compulsion to have his sense of himself as a national apostle register with the public. But more serious misgivings have endured from his long climb out of obscurity—not only about his 1984 “Hymie town” comments and his stubborn loyalty to Louis Farrakhan but about his tale of having held a

THE COPTIC WEDDING

Decades go by, yet I keep mouthing
the same stupid lines.
I notice a bird in the park and can't
remember its name,
but wonder again, for the umpteenth time.

Young women behave
as if they have been taught to believe
a show of ignorance
charms every admirer. From someone
my age, that's tedious.

Where lay the harm
in my mother's reiterations
and nervous denials,
except to herself? My impatience
when she insisted
she'd never been there, heard of or done it—
whatever was mentioned—
like a child who always gets blamed,
still makes me ashamed.
She seemed afraid of everything.

Being stupid—or becoming like her—
was my worst fear
as a girl. When I forget, now,
what something's called,
it can conjure her up from the ground.

Celebration noise,
ululation and the throb of drumming
across the formal paths
and flower beds, drew every Sunday-
morning stroller
toward its source: a Coptic wedding,
a dancing circle
of white-robed men and henna-footed girls
around a couple
with solemn faces topped by golden crowns.

Our hunger for ceremony matched;
side by side we watched.
Neither of us would rest until
old promises were kept,
neglected rituals performed.

Far from her own ancestors
was how she must have felt, uprooted
as that groom and bride.
Recognizing a chaffinch, I knew it.
All of us spun out of orbit.

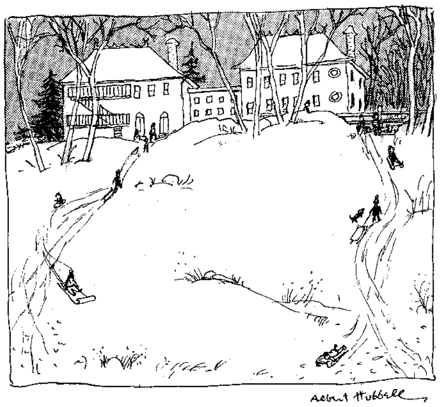
—Ruth Fainlight

• •

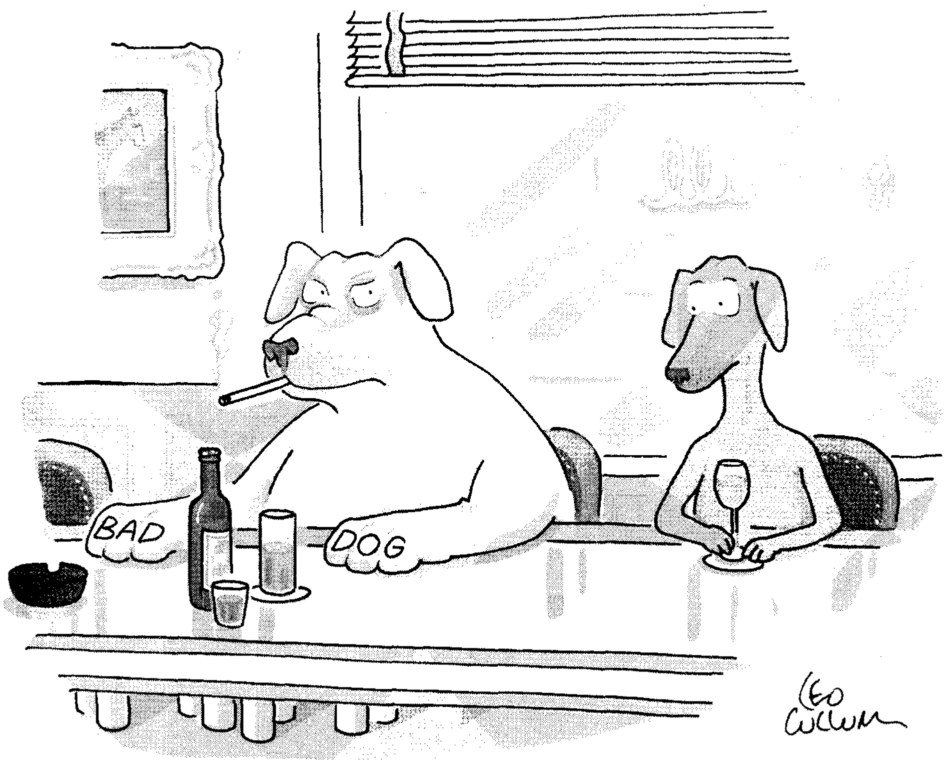
bloody and dying King in his arms, and about how he has managed to subsidize his one-man operation for so long.

What may be Jackson's most profound duality has to do with the matter of race itself. For all his political lyricisms about expanding his populist movement to a wider constituency, he still seems to identify most passionately with the pains of the black past in America. It's as if the black support that made everything possible for him in the beginning had come to hold him captive. Some submerged smolder of racial aggrievement in his message and manner has stirred an answering unease in many white Americans. The very inflections of his voice discomfort some sensibilities; for whatever reason, Jackson has not undertaken to "whiten" his enunciation. His voice still has the croker-sack textures of the muddy alleys and pool-hall street corners of his origins.

As a political phenomenon, Jackson is finally unclassifiable. Precedents do not contain or explain him. Jackson himself seems at times not quite certain who he has so precipitously become, what he now means, where he is actually headed. Polls indicate that he is one of the most widely recognized figures in American public life, but his prominence now, not only nationally but across the world—when he travels abroad, he regularly holds sessions with heads of state—has left him, one sometimes feels, slightly dazed, vaguely unquiet, as if not wholly sure yet how much he really belongs in the midst of all this. He shows a constant anxiety, when he is careering across the country or racing abroad, to have the familiar, reassuring society of his staff and old friends always enclosing him—to the extent of displaying instant alarm at being left by himself in an elevator: "Where you going? You not going to be leaving me alone here, are you?" But the old urgency that propelled him from his meagre beginnings still propels him. "I can't quit," Jackson says. "I can't turn it loose. It won't turn loose of me."



IT was several weeks after his spectacular oration at the 1988 Convention that, after intermittent glimpses of him on television over the years, I saw Jackson in person again for the first time since the late sixties. From a few encounters while I was covering the waning days of the civil-rights movement, a memory had lasted of a strapping, somewhat oversized youth, a newly attached and reverential assistant to Dr. King, unusually grave and self-contained but fairly pulsing with some tense urgency of his own. There was already a certain glamour of portent about him that prompted other journalists besides me to speculate that, of all King's aides, he just might turn out to be the successor someday. After King's assassination, he had returned to his adoptive city of Chicago to form his own organization, People United to Save Humanity, or PUSH, an eclectic social ministry that existed mostly as an instrument for Jackson's free-form aspirations. Through the protracted



twilight of the civil-rights movement which followed King's death, one was sporadically aware of Jackson casting about for a public identity, passing through a series of mutations, in dashikis, Afros, clerical gowns, safari suits. None of these varied manifestations—not even his metamorphosis into a Presidential candidate—brought him into any clearer focus. Now, on a dimly drizzling Saturday morning, he had returned briefly to Chicago from his travels around the country on behalf of the Dukakis-Bentsen campaign, to conduct his regular Saturday service in a former synagogue that served as an auditorium at his PUSH headquarters.

A flourish of organ tones brought Jackson striding onstage. Television, which commonly exaggerates presence, had not exaggerated Jackson's. A commandingly tall figure (six-two), straight-backed, with a strutful bulge to his chest, and a high-collared dash of the cavalier about him, he was attired this morning in a charcoal-gray suit traced with faint pinstripes, an ice-blue shirt, and a glimmering tie. A crimson handkerchief brimmed from his breast pocket; he could have been a Beverly Hills investment broker. Yet I was struck by how much his look—his broad, flattish face, his wide, helmetlike brow above far-spaced and slightly bulby eyes with a vaguely split focus, his Zapata mustache curling over a small pouch of a mouth—seemed to bear some elusive resemblance to that of King himself. He wore King's expression of almost Oriental imperturbability, a resolute high seriousness, and he had the same level, still gaze. As the congregation began clapping and singing "You gotta keep reaching," he noticed several journalists in the front row below him, widened his eyes, gave a quick cock of his head, with one of his curiously flat little squeezed grins, and hiked high a long thumb that curved far backward like an ibex's horn, as if in acknowledgment of some secret complicity between them.

Finally, he took the pulpit, loosely cupping his hands on its edges. He began—much in the manner of King—in an idly browsing voice, as if moseying about for what he would actually wind up preaching. "We moving into the latter stages of this campaign now. But we still must make our voices felt. Sometimes we may have, may have *narrow* choices"—shuffling up the lines, looping them out, with soft little hesitant hangs of suspense as if fly casting—"but we do always have choices. We struggled long and paid the price of suffering to win the right to those choices. We do have choices now!" He turned to look about him, rolling his head around (as King would) to see how he was beginning to register on those collected on each side of him, and, meeting with an assenting hum, nodded, and went on. "But then we go on beyond November." He now turned all the way around in the pulpit to look at those seated behind him, as a gleefully expectant murmur arose everywhere in the auditorium, along with a few scattered whoops. "Going on *beyond* November. The race goes not to the swift but to the patient and long-enduring, to those who persist and tire not. The best is yet to come!" He had found the current now. He took a step back from the pulpit, spread both hands down flat against the side pockets of his snugly buttoned coat, with his elbows winged out, and reared back to bay, "We going to outwork, outwalk, outtalk, outfast, and outlast them! The best is yet to come! I don't need no alarm clock to wake me up in the morning—I'm driven by *purpose*."

THAT Saturday-morning service and the following, finishing days of the campaign marked the beginning of an extended stretch of time I spent with Jackson, in what turned out to be a kind of movable tournament of talking which went on, at intervals, through the next three years. More exactly, it was a matter of Jackson's carrying on a continuous discourse of recollections and reflections—not unlike those one-actor stage monologues from the life of Mark Twain or Teddy Roosevelt, but with the principal himself providing the performance—which ranged from his mother's kitchen, down in Greenville, to snow-dusted streets in Moscow. It was a free-floating disquisition, never necessarily connected to his surroundings, that he kept up while hurrying from hotel to airport and on to the next hotel, tramping up and down stairways from one engagement to the next.

Jackson has, of course, become fabled for an inextinguishable loquacity verging on logorrhea—the columnist Mike Royko has observed, "He looks at a defenseless ear the way William (Refrigerator) Perry eyes a roast chicken"—and his compulsion to expound is not daunted by hopeless language differ-

YET ANOTHER FAMILY THAT DECIDED TO DROP EVERYTHING AND FOLLOW THE GRATEFUL DEAD AROUND FOR A WHILE
Did we turn off the coffeemaker?
R. Chast

ences. Riding into Paris early one morning after a flight from Gabon at the end of a tour through sub-Saharan Africa, he began talking to a Gabonese general sitting in the front seat, a chunky man in a funereally dark civilian suit, about how the splendors of Paris passing by them had been created largely from the wealth of French colonies, when he suddenly seemed to realize that he was getting no response, and leaned forward to nudge the general's shoulder. "That right, what I'm saying?"

The general turned and smiled uncertainly. "*Je ne parle pas anglais.*"

Jackson paused only an instant—"Hunh? Oh. Yeah, but you get my drift, don't you?"—and declaimed on. Often, at the end of a long and manically scrambling day in Armenia or Nigeria, the last sound to be heard in the hotel corridor late at night as one struggled to slip somehow into sleep was Jackson still hoarsely bleating away in his room to an aide or on the phone to someone in Chicago or Los Angeles, or even Tokyo. And then one would be awakened early the next morning by the same urgent booming, which produced the impression that he had been at it through the entire night. More than once, he brought to mind Faulkner's fancy, in his Nobel Prize-acceptance speech, about the last red evening at the end of time, in which there would still be the lone sound of man's inexhaustible voice clamoring away in nothingness. On a flight from Paris back to the United States, in a Gulfstream executive jet furnished him by Gabon's President, Jackson kept up such an unceasing flow of reminiscences and random musings that I finally retreated into the rear cabin and feigned sleep for several hours, dimly aware of his wandering back several times to check on whether maybe we could resume.

I soon suspected that, in my case, his volubility was invigorated by a certain fascination with the circumstance that I had grown up only twenty-six miles away from him, both of us being about the same age—that in the South Carolina of the fifties we had grown up parallel to each other, as it were, but in two utterly separate worlds. My world had been in the comfortably insulated sedateness of a modest middle-class white neighborhood, where my father was a Southern Baptist minister. More than that, I had eventually gone on to attend the college in Greenville, Furman University, whose men's campus had once sprawled over oak-bowered lawns just across the street from a huddled row of houses where Jackson grew up. Jackson is fond of constantly discovering in life around him what he calls "the poetries of time"—far-flung correspondences, synchronicities large and small, wide circles being closed—and this particular little convergence seemed to afford him an exorbitant and lasting relish. At dinner with Armenian officials one evening in Yerevan, he reported to the republic's Communist Party chairman, with a zesty drollness, "Frady, here, he was raised in Anderson, just a few miles from where I was raised, over in Greenville. I grew up right beside the university there, Furman. Always wanted to go to school there. But

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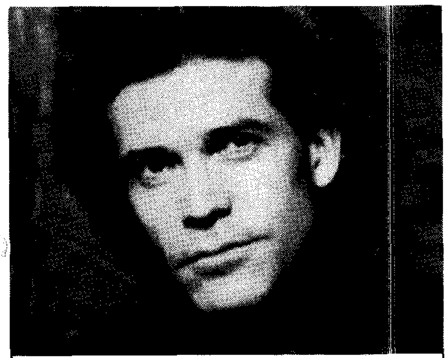

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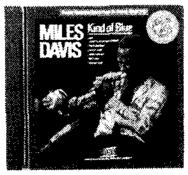

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couldn't in those days, of course. Frady, though, *he* comes over and goes to Furman. Our family, we used to iron his shirts—twenty cents apiece. Used to park his car at the football games. He'd go to the library there—I couldn't go." What he did not say (though he had not neglected to suggest it on a number of other occasions) was "But here we are—he's running around following me, after I've run for President two times."

THROUGHOUT the closing days of the '88 Presidential campaign, Jackson coursed about the country for the Dukakis-Bentsen ticket in a small jet provided him by the Democratic Party—an accommodation he had exacted in last-hour negotiations at the Convention in Atlanta, and probably an unprecedented consideration to be accorded a failed primary candidate. Nevertheless, as Jackson was lofted from one rally to the next, slumped in his shirtsleeves in a narrow seat in the cramped front cabin of the jet, his bulky hands folded over his paunch, his shoes off, and his feet plopped on the seat facing him, he continued to fume—indeed, it would rankle for weeks after the election—over having been denied the Vice-Presidential nomination. "They said, 'Jackson, we thank you for registering all those new voters. Thank you for bringing issues to the campaign. Thank you for the excitement. Thank you for rousing people. Thank you for a historic breakthrough. *But*' "—he snapped his head to the side, as if in a wince, rolled his eyes slowly around to peer up from under his brow, and dropped his voice to a soft, deliberate huskiness—" 'can't put you on the ticket. No, can't do *that*.' In the name of Party unity and creating a basis for future relationships, I stepped away from a confrontation on Thursday night in Atlanta, and nobody can say I haven't supported the ticket with enthusiasm. Fact, I've travelled more miles for it, spoken to more people, than Dukakis and Bentsen have. Yeah." He allowed himself a quick snuffle of a laugh. "Worked harder for them than they've worked for themselves. 'Spose either one of them would've done that for me?"

Jackson soldiered on through the last days of the Presidential campaign still brooding privately over how, as he divined it, he had been roundly dismissed by the nation's political estate. "It's 'cause we came just a heartbeat away from being our party's Presidential nominee, all without being accountable to those elements who have imputed to themselves custodianship of our nation's destiny," he said. "Hard thing for them to let into their heads that we did that." Whenever Jackson says "we," it sets one mentally scurrying back and forth for the reference (himself? blacks in general? his whole constituency of supporters?), but then one realizes that the meaning of his "we" is always in a sort of indeterminate flux between the collective and Jackson personally, which to him usually come to the same thing anyway. He found the attitude of Party leaders toward him especially scandalizing. "Real, national stuff, you know, was for the big boys. They'd say, 'Well, now, we know he knows something about civil rights, but what's he know about the budget? Banking, interest rates? NATO, national defense? Couldn't know about all those things. Mean, couldn't actually be wanting to be the *President*. So what's he *really* want?' Tha', tha', that's"—he stammered in urgency—"that's a contemptuous question. 'What's he really want?' Disrespectful question. Don't ask it about anybody else. It has an underlying assumption of racial limitation. And then they say"—Jackson's voice now lapsed into rapid, thin, mincing mimicry—" 'What's he mean by this "Respect me," what's he mean by this respect thing, what's he talking about?' That became even more a problem for them than budget, defense. 'What's he really want for respect? How we ought to handle that?' Became the only question for them. 'How can we handle Jackson?' And talking about 'the Jackson factor'—that ain't nothing but flat racist, what that phrase is about." As he was rummaging through these complaints, we were flying somewhere over Illinois, and he twisted impatiently in his seat and glowered for a moment out the little oval window beside him. "Hell, I don't ask that they necessarily agree with me on the issues. But I do ask that they take me legitimately."

Included in this disgruntlement of Jackson's were the news media, which, he averred, were "enmeshed in that whole system" that perversely continued to discount his importance. The truth is, though, that, for all his pro-

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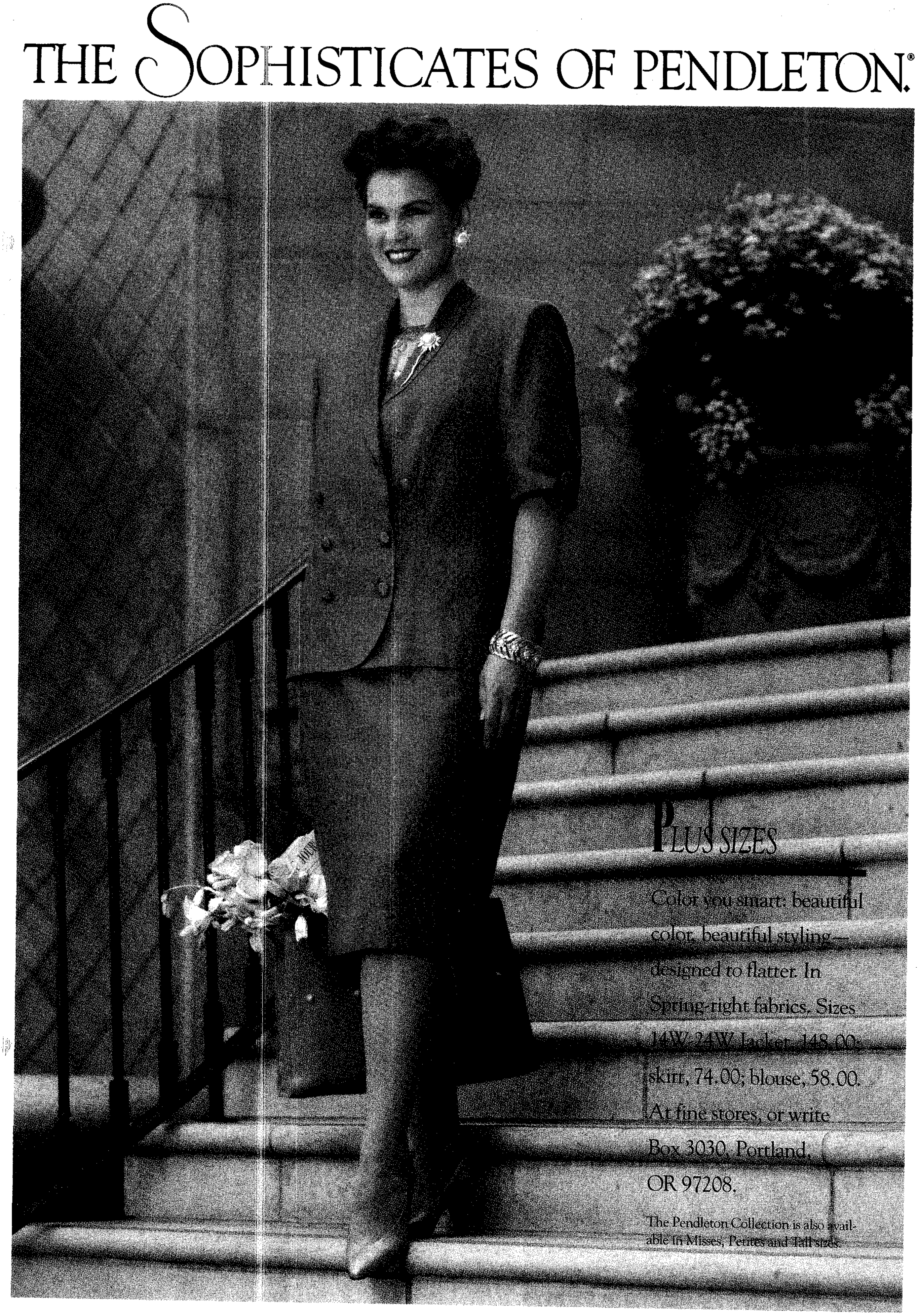
Golden Threads, Anchorage
ARIZONA
Desert Pendleton Co., Phoenix: Metro Center • Scottsdale: Fashion Square
Dillard's Southwest, Phoenix
CALIFORNIA
Bonnie's, Encinitas
Brea Pendleton, Brea: Brea Mall
Elegant Lady, Sacramento
Emporium, Palo Alto: Stanford Center • San Francisco: Downtown, Stonestown
Marbro's, Inglewood
Robinson's, Torrance: Del Amo Fashion Center
San Diego Pendleton, San Diego: Fashion Valley
San Francisco Pendleton, San Francisco
San Gabriel Valley Pendleton, San Marino
South Bay Pendleton, Torrance: Town & Country Center
Walnut Creek Pendleton, Walnut Creek
COLORADO
Cherry Creek Pendleton, Denver
Colorado Springs Pendleton, Colorado Springs
IDAHO
Treasure Valley Pendleton, Boise: Boise Town Square
ILLINOIS
Carson Pirie Scott, Chicago: Evergreen Plaza, Merchandise Mart, State Street
Crawford's Women's World, Arlington Heights: Ridge Plaza • Rolling Meadows: Rolling Meadows Shopping Center • Vernon Hills: River Tree Court • Wilmette: Wilmette Commons
Marion Court, Geneva
Parson's of Park Ridge, Park Ridge
Pendleton Products Store, Chicago: Palmer House Arcade
Von Maur, Decatur: Hickory Point Mall
INDIANA
John Shepard, Inc., Indianapolis: Keystone at the Crossing
L.S. Ayres, Ft. Wayne: Glenbrook Mall • Indianapolis: Glendale Mall
IOWA
Von Maur, Cedar Falls: College Square Mall • Cedar Rapids: Lindale Mall, Westdale Mall • Davenport: North Park Mall • Des Moines: Valley West Mall • Moline: South Park Mall
MICHIGAN
Crowley's, Selected Stores
Gilmore's, Kalamazoo: Downtown
Milliken's, Traverse City
Roger's Department Store, Grand Rapids: 28th Street
Sperry's, Port Huron
Sy's Unlimited, Lathrup Village: Southfield Road
MINNESOTA
Glass Block, Duluth
MISSOURI
The Jones Store, Kansas City: Metcalf South
Plaza Pendleton, Kansas City: Plaza
MONTANA
Hennessy's, Billings: Rimrock Mall
NEW MEXICO
Dillard's Southwest
OHIO
Geiger's Pendleton Shoppe, Cleveland
The Higbee Co., Akron: Summit Mall • Canton: Belden Village Mall • Cleveland: Downtown, Great Lakes Mall, Westgate Mall
Lion Store, Toledo: All Locations
Sharon's Ms. Roberts, Marietta
Suzannes's Plus Shop, Heath
Winsome Lady, Cleveland: Beachcliff Market Square
OREGON
The Portland Pendleton Shop, Portland: Downtown
TEXAS
Cox's, Waco
Foley's, Austin: Barton Creek, Highland Mall • Dallas: Valley View • Ft. Worth: Hulen • Houston: Memorial City
Fulher Fashions, Ft. Worth
Sledges for Women, Dallas
WASHINGTON
Sporleder's, Walla Walla: Downtown
WISCONSIN
Carson Pirie Scott, Chicago: Evergreen Plaza, Merchandise Mart, State Street
Strassman's Pendleton Shop, Waukesha: Galleria West



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It was only 2:00 PM and Keith Heavenridge already knew the rest of his day wasn't going to turn out like he had planned. Heavenridge was already late for a 1:45 meeting. Leaving his office, he saw that his car was blocked by his wife's Volvo.

"I have to admit I was a little annoyed at the time," he recalls. "Instead of waiting for her to move it, I decided to take the Volvo."

This action would take on greater meaning thirty-five minutes later. Because as Keith was turning onto Sunset Boulevard, a twisting, turning, four-lane highway with no median to separate traffic, another car came flying around a blind turn and, crossing four lanes and speed bumps, lost complete control, hitting the Heavenridge Volvo GLE wagon head on.

"I don't even think I took my foot off of the gas," says Heavenridge. "He came out of nowhere. All I remember is this crunching feeling to the very core of my body."

"I went down to the impound where the tow truck had taken the car after the accident," Cecily Heavenridge remembers, "and when I got to the car, I couldn't believe it. My stomach got all knotted. I mean there was nothing left of the front of the car. Nothing. It was crunched right up to where Keith was sitting.

"I know in my heart I would have been a widow raising three kids if he had not been driving my car that day."

"The front of the car collapsed like an accordion just like I had read it would," Keith Heavenridge says. "The air bag went off. The first few moments I just sat there, doing an inventory of my condition. I was a little shaken up, my wrist hurt from banging the windshield, but that's about it. I then opened the door, got out and walked over to check on the other driver."

Beginning with Volvo's unique safety cage construction developed in 1944, to crumple zones and child safety innovations, to today, on 700 and 900 series cars, a side impact protection system years ahead of government requirements, Volvo design engineers have introduced 47 new safety features to their vehicles in almost as many years.

"An experience like this teaches you that you can be the safest driver in the world and because someone else is not paying attention or because of the circumstances at a given point in time, you can get into an accident," Heavenridge says.

There are 34,000,000 accidents each year in this country and over 40,000 deaths. To look at these statistics is at the same time frightening and deceiving. Because at a distance, numbers become anonymous and accidents only happen to "other people."

Keith Heavenridge knows how false this sense of security can be. As he stands by Sunset Boulevard recounting his accident, another one almost takes place. Tires screech. Horns blare.

He just shakes his head and walks away.

Each year, the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety studies the occupant death rates in thousands of accidents.* In its April 1991 study of 1984-88 models, the car with the lowest fatality rate was the Volvo 240 wagon. Each year IIHS has been analyzing accident statistics, Volvo has been at the top or near the top in their respective model categories. No car manufacturer can guarantee you will survive an accident. No company can say you won't have an injury. But statistics show and crash tests demonstrate that some cars can offer more protection than others.

"I thought of how close we had come with Keith's accident to being alone," Cecily Heavenridge says. "I never want to be in that position again. Since then, we've bought two more Volvos."

There are certain moments in your life when your entire world becomes crystal clear. When all your priorities are in order. For Keith Heavenridge, that moment came on January 3, 1990 at 2:35 PM.

It is now almost two years later. Keith Heavenridge is having his picture taken for this advertisement. In another room in his house, his son, David, nine years old, picks up a photo taken of his father's crumpled Volvo after the crash.

"My dad was in this car."

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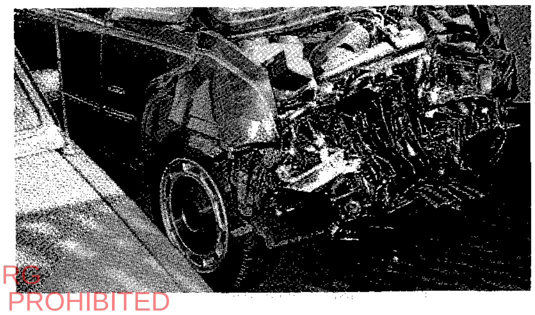
VOLVO



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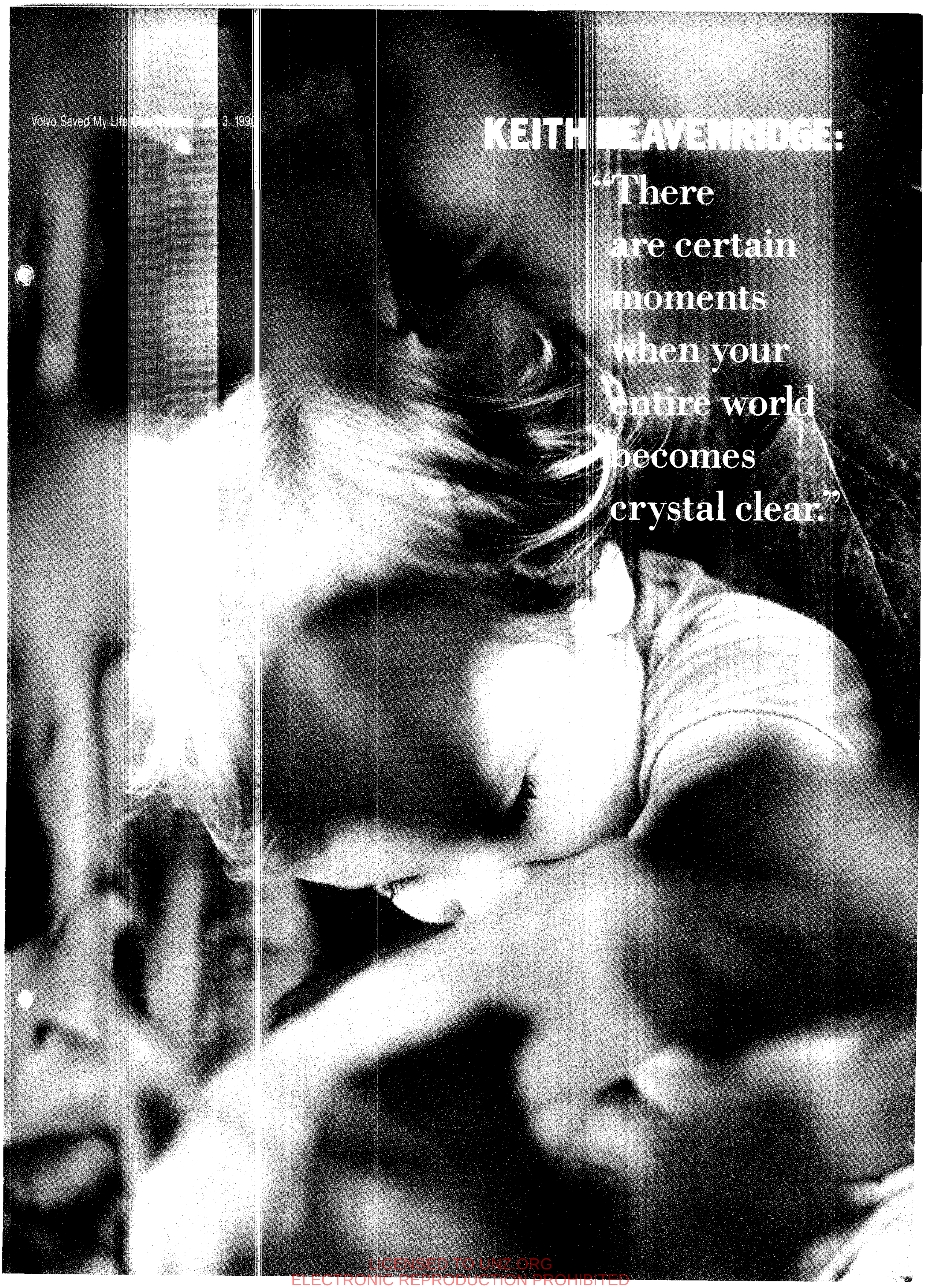
*Study published April 1991 of 134 biggest selling 1984-88 model year cars during 1985-89 calendar years.

Volvo Saved My Life [illegible] 3, 1990



KEITH HEAVENRIDGE:

"There
are certain
moments
when your
entire world
becomes
crystal clear."

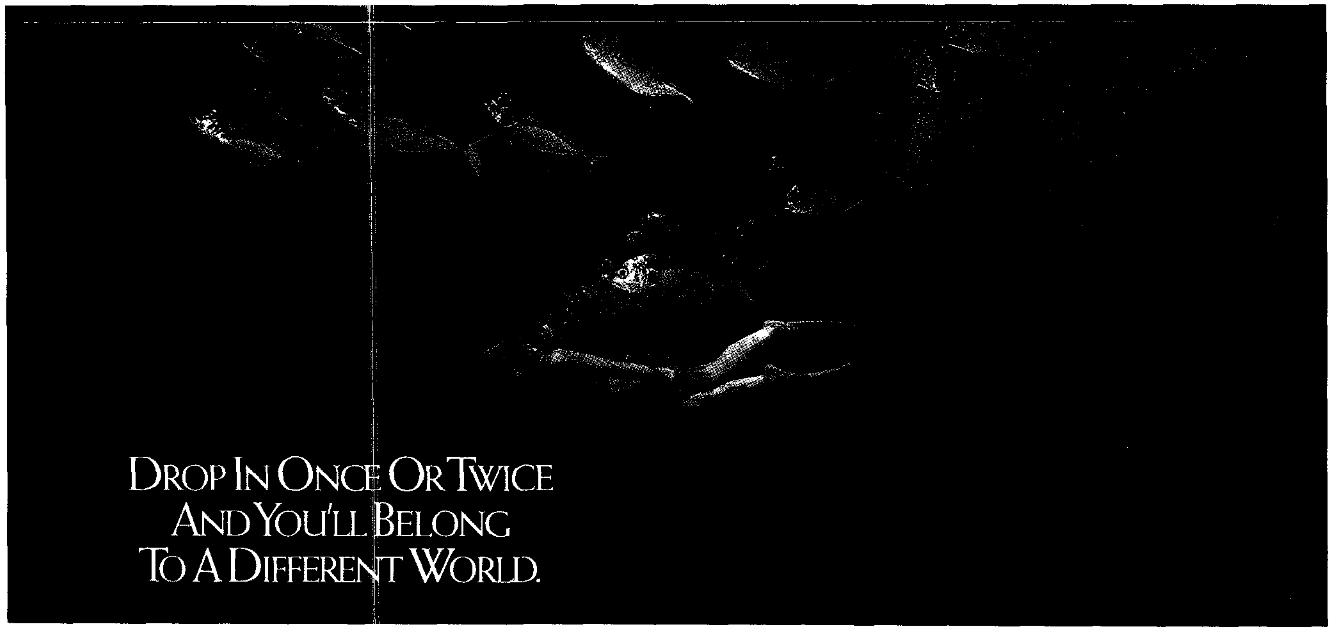
tests, Jackson is captivated with the media's potential for giving back amplified reflections of himself. Even during the last week of the campaign, he would linger after a rally amid a clump of reporters, no matter how far behind schedule he was, to engage in a seemingly endless play with their questions. "I just want to ask one final question," a reporter would say, and Jackson would hoot, not without glee, "Yeah, I know, and so would he," pointing to others around him, almost as if prompting them, too. "And he would, and she would, and he would, but this has got to be my last, I got to go." Then he would remain among them for ten minutes longer, cheerfully calling out at last, "Now, I really, I can't, I really got to go, friends," and tossing high an open palm to everyone in jubilant benediction. "O.K.? Goin' bye-bye now." Beyond that, at some unspeakably late hour, a reporter's phone would suddenly ring, and there would be Jackson's voice, drawling low and thick, "Hey. 'S yo' brother. Jesse." What followed was almost always idle chat. At the end of a day of campaigning in New York City, just before he ducked into Bill Cosby's town house for a few hours, Jackson ambled back to a press car pulled up behind him and, leaning down to its back window, instructed a woman reporter for a network, who had been covering him since the early primaries, to call him later that evening at the Plaza. When she finally reached him there, it was only to be informed by Jackson that he had found her questions that day to be unusually sharp, and, furthermore, he liked very much the outfit she'd had on.

Most of all, Jackson is forever undertaking to assimilate reporters into his own excitement about his portent and he appears genuinely baffled when these attempts almost invariably end in disappointment. "The media have never really understood what I'm about" is his conclusion. "So many of 'em moral midgets. I mean, may sound a little egotistical to say that what I'm about is larger than they capable of graspin'—but, you know, in a lot of cases, dammit, it's *true*. May not even be so much racial as just can't make the cultural and sociological adjustment in their head." Yet, as Jackson went on, it was evident that he thought the disregard *was* racial. About his stunning victory in the Michigan caucuses he said, "Press wouldn't even credit that. They had this attitude, they'd tell me, 'You say these things about issues, and people respond 'cause you got a, a *fol-low-ing*. You be a good talker, and they are reacting, and neither one of y'all making a lot of sense. They just caught up in the thing.' No appreciation of them or me intellectually. Wasn't that I was thinking and they were thinking—we weren't cogitating, we were just rapping. You know, 'In reality, he don't understand the real facts of life, the big stuff.' Just 'You talk 'cause you a parrot.' Reception by white farmers, for instance. Farmers began to respond to us everywhere. But major white press, they'd never write it down, never report it—would say, 'It's unreal. It's bullshit.' Never write an article about how this movement of Jackson's is expanding."

I suggested that part of the reason might be that his evocations of a populist Blessed Community could strike some journalists as composed of wishful sentimentalism belonging more to folk-song lyrics than to the national realpolitik.

"Just the opposite," he said. "It *is* real. Sing unto us a new song—this is a new song. Gonna be a hit song, too. Tipoff should have been when I could get the number of votes in '88 that Hart got in '84, with all the baggage that I carry, stereotype of my background as an urban black male." We now happened to be riding through a cold and overcast Iowa countryside, along with a small party of journalists, in a mammoth, seventy-two-thousand-dollar Winnebago Itasca Windcruiser, which was like a floating motel lobby, and which had been acquired by one of Jackson's white supporters after he won the Iowa lottery. Now, with its owner at the wheel, it was bearing Jackson to the Des Moines airport while broadcasting Sousa marches over the wide, drab fields spinning by. Jackson, perched sidewise in the elevated swivel seat beside the driver, was wearing a modish gray plaid suit with a green feed-company cap from a courthouse rally, and even though this was the concluding day of the Presidential campaign, he went on grumping to this last straggle of reporters scattered along the sofa-lounges behind him about how slightingly he'd been covered back during the primaries. "I mean, for me to even come *close* to getting double digits here in Iowa, better than Gore or Babbit, against my sociological odds, is a bigger statement than just numbers. But in the television reports through that whole night we got only about fifteen seconds. 'Oh, by the way, Jackson—' If there had been a respect based on substance and the implications of this dynamic, it would have been a different kind of coverage. Media's not just a transmitter, you know it's 'spose to be an *interpreter*. I mean, Super Tuesday, popular vote—hell, we *won*. Even with that afterthought kind of coverage. But it was all out of the realm of their accustomed thought processes. Lot of times, we had a planeload of reporters, but the story just wasn't breaking through."

Even so, while smarting from all these perceived slights, Jackson had barnstormed on through the campaign heartily enough to become strangely like a fifth, shadow player in the race—or, rather, fourth, with Quayle having been more or less dematerialized by Bush's edgy managers until the election was safely past. After the Convention, in fact, Jackson had cast his role somewhat grandly as "to keep the campaign alive and vibrant." His service to the ticket, though, consisted mostly of dutifully commending Dukakis while, with spectacularly more energy, belaboring Bush and Quayle: "They both rich young rulers, looking down on the disadvantaged with contempt. There is no fairness in them. They a barren fig tree, there is no fruit of hope to be taken from them." Quayle afforded Jackson particularly extravagant sport, raillery of almost a schoolyard roughness: "Our national bird is the eagle, it's not the frail quail. Bush may be petty and coldhearted on the issues in America, but Quayle don't even *comprehend* the issues. Flat don't know what's going on. Comparing himself to Kennedy, got all this experience, National Guard and stuff—only war Fraternity Man ever fought was the war between Gary and Indianapolis. Says he's mature 'cause he's forty-one. Look here, y'all, everybody in this country who's forty-two was forty-one for *a whole year*. And can you imagine Bush now talking about how he's gonna be puttin' Quayle in charge of crisis management? Quayle *is* a crisis that need *to be* managed." But his fulminations against Bush—"this former C.I.A. director, operating in that ethics-free zone, wanting now to be your President and mine"—were of a rather hyperbolic and sometimes startling stridency. Of Bush's derogations of the American Civil Liberties Union and liberals in general, Jackson blared, "When you attack lovers of civil liberties and freedom as subversive, you in an ugly tradition, Mr. Bush. You join the tradition of Pharaoh, you in the tradition of Herod, and Hoover, and Hitler. All them attacked civil liberties as subversive, too." On the whole, "something dangerous and mean-spirited about Bush," he announced. "A disdainful rich man with no mercy, turning his back on the poor and homeless. Bush so much against public housing, let's do him a special favor, let's keep him out of the White House, 'cause that *is* public housing." Jackson liked to engage in a kind of mock-sorrowful reproving of Bush, not altogether fair and not precisely true, a gently appalled, instructive chiding: "Mr. Bush, in his ugly-spirited way, says Dukakis has supporters who were liberal militants in the sixties." (Bush himself, of course, had opposed the 1964 Civil Rights Act.) "Well, those who perished back then for the right to vote were on the *right* side of history, Mr. Bush, and those who hated them were wrong. Viola Liuzzo, white mother from Detroit, came down to Selma to help in the struggle, shot to death on a dark highway. Mr. Bush, Viola Liuzzo was right, and those who murdered her were *wrong*." At a rally in Flint, Michigan, this litany of rebuke mounted on a gradual welling of cheers and clapping. "Schwerner, Goodman, and Chaney, two Jews and a black, killed in Mississippi, bulldozed over with their eyes wide open—they were *right*, Mr. Bush, and those who killed them"—after an instant's pause, with a pained softness—"were *wrong*," to a great concussion of applause and to shouts of "*Please tell it!*" And he went on, "Martin Luther King, John F. Kennedy, those four little girls blown up in a Birmingham church, Mr. Bush, *they were right*, and those who took their lives, they were *wrong!*" The ovation now was deafening. Fair or not, the effect of these progressive regretful reproaches was devastating—Jackson loosed into full political combat can be fearsome—and from his delicately savage admonitions he would proceed into warnings of a vaguely cosmic balefulness: "When you unkind to the homeless, disparaging them as derelicts, you on treacherous moral ground, Mr. Bush. 'Cause there is another power. The moral arc of the universe is long"—he echoed King's oratory—"but it bends toward justice. Those who cannot defend themselves, they got a silent partner, they got—got *another* power. And when you attack liberals, good-hearted folks, lovers of civil liberties, Mr. Bush, watch out! You tampering with another power! They once said we were nothing from nowhere going nowhere, we never could win"—this "we" again carrying multiple referents, his own campaigns not least among them—"but, Mr. Bush, there was *another* power. You may be riding high today, Mr. Bush. But there *is* another power!" (For all these imprecations, late on Election Night, Jackson placed a congratulatory call to



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Bush before talking to Dukakis. "Time to move on," he explained afterward.)

As for the campaign of Dukakis himself, Jackson had dispensed approving testimonials (though there was always a question of how much of his support was really transferrable) that, however earnest, were of noticeably milder vigor. "They saying he doesn't have passion, Dukakis. That's a new extra-constitutional requirement, this passion business. It's the *people* who have the passion—Presidents have the priorities. Jack Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson had never led a demonstration. They didn't inspire us—*we* inspired *them. We* had the passion, and we gave them the priorities, the Public Accommodations and Voting Rights Acts. Now it's working mothers needing day care who got the passion. Poor folks needing health care got the passion. The homeless and workers lost their jobs abroad and family farmers overpowered by giant conglomerates who got the passion, and it's Dukakis who has the priorities. This campaign is not about the passion of Dukakis, it's about the *lack* of *compassion* of one George Bush!"

But Jackson was hardly unmindful of the difference in public effect between him and Dukakis, and, away from the rallies, he could not resist occasional notations of it. Aboard his plane one night, a reporter clicked on a miniature, hand-held television and happened to pick up Dukakis broadcasting an appeal to the nation. At one point, the small screen blanked into static. "What happened?" Jackson said. "Dukakis just deliver one of his punch lines?"

Inevitably, the disparity between Dukakis and Jackson in "the passion quotient," as some called it, became a particular source of discomfort to Dukakis's own people; and Dukakis himself seemed wary of wandering into any close proximity to Jackson that would tempt comparisons. For that matter, the same discomfort seemed to be shared by other Democratic figures. According to Jackson, he once appealed to Senator Sam Nunn, of Georgia, and Senator Charles Robb, of Virginia, "Look, guys, we"—in this instance, "we" clearly meant Jackson himself—"take y'all to our churches and meeting halls in the black community. But you got a reluctance, seems, to take us to your First Baptist churches, your country clubs and Kiwanis and Lions clubs, and us *share* platforms together." Jackson explained, "All I was asking them for was equal access. If they'd give me just that much, just an entrée to their crowd, I'll handle the rest of it myself."

When I suggested that they might be wary of being out-thundered by him, he took some gratification at the implication that any public association with them would require of him deferential restraints: "Well, that's like askin'—mean, can't ask a home-run hitter to *bunt.*"

But more than being chary of Jackson's outsized personal presence, Dukakis's people—increasingly sensitive to being styled by Bush's forces as radical liberals—had become obsessively shy about any open association with Jackson's neo-populist political following. Despite the apparent entente cordiale formed at the Atlanta Convention, Dukakis's campaign, Jackson claimed, had subsequently discarded Jackson's organizers and, along with them, his emergent new body of voters—especially his sizable constituency in the inner cities. "That crowd around Dukakis, they just don't understand the whole of this country," Jackson said. "They got about the same picture of it that Bush's folks do. They don't know where all the bodies really are. I can't remember seeing one ad of theirs that's reflected the diversity of America."

On Election Day, however, as Jackson arrived for a rally at a college in Duluth, he was first taken to a back office to return a call that had come in a few minutes before from Dukakis's headquarters: the voter turnout in many of the inner cities was running far below anticipations. Could he make quick appearances in Milwaukee, Cleveland, and Detroit before the polls closed? Jackson strode with a visibly reënergized briskness back down the hall toward the rally awaiting him in the college gym, where he was greeted with a storm of cheering—"*Jes-se! Jes-se! Jes-*

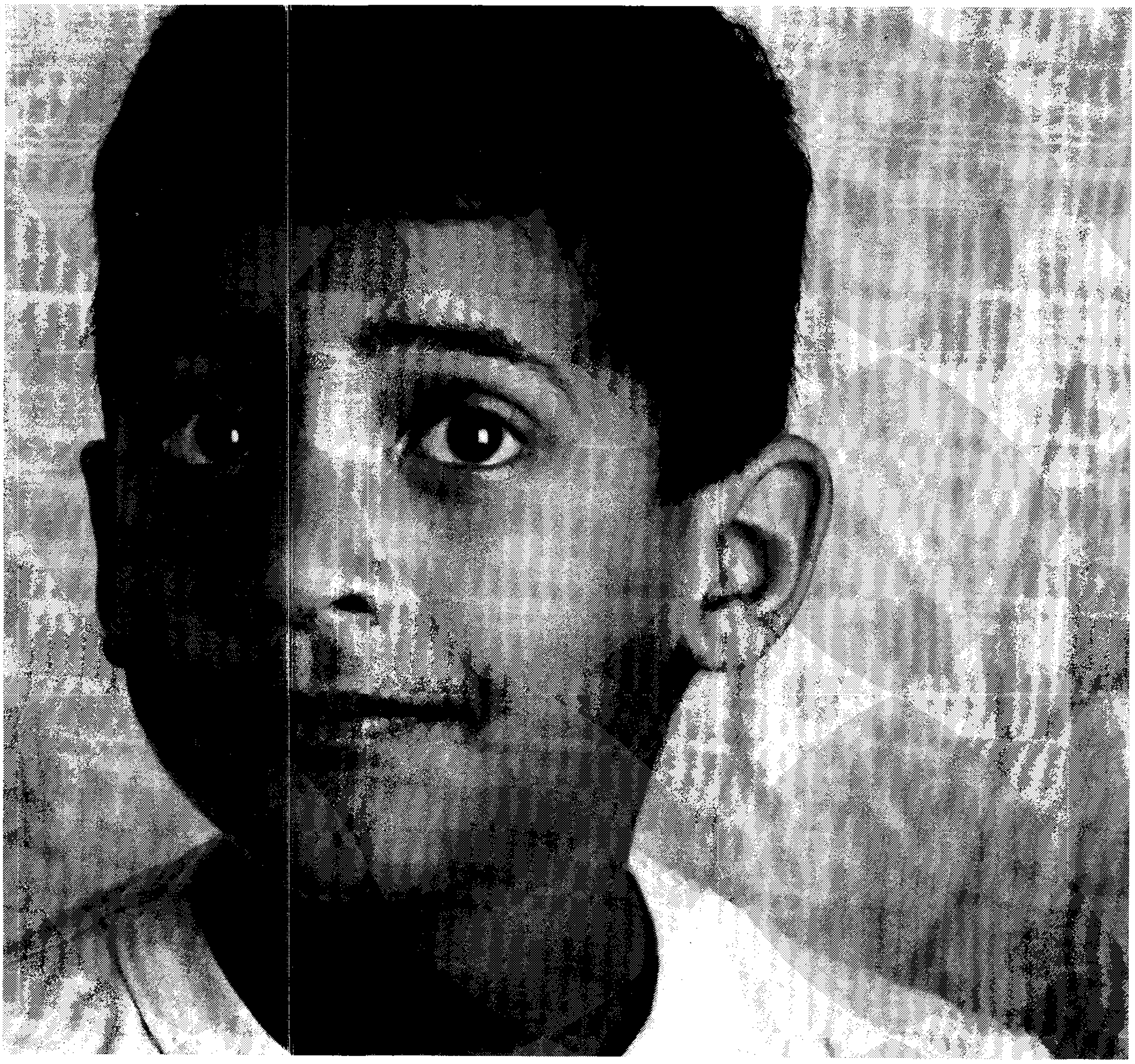

Photo: Dick Luria

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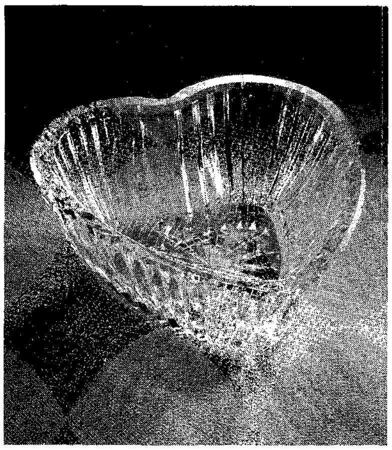

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se!"—to which, after bounding up on the platform, he began flinging the hiked crescent of his thumb over his head as if pumping the ovation along, grinning with his tongue dabbed out between his teeth in glee. After the rally, he tarried for a second by his car among reporters to call out, "Governor Dukakis is asking me to alter my schedule and to go to Milwaukee. So I must hurry now."

He toppled then into the front seat of the car, and asked an aide, "Where's the others? Let's get going—"

A somewhat rumpled and thistle-haired student leaned his head in the window across from Jackson. "Reverend Jackson? Just want to say you're the most inspiring man I know."

Jackson pitched himself across the seat to shake the youth's hand. "Thank you, love you, buddy, hang in there." Then, turning back to his aide, he said, "Where's your telephone? Need to find out— Got your phone? Everybody in the cars? We got to go here."

A moment later, his car swung into the street, and after a headlong ride it pulled up at the airport. Inside, Jackson got on the phone again with Dukakis's people and, assuming a carefully modulated politeness, informed them that it had turned out to be a logistical impossibility to drop into all three cities within the few remaining hours of voting, but he would at least make a stop in Milwaukee. His agreeably obliging demeanor vanished as soon as he hung up the phone. He murmured flatly, "Now Santa Claus running into heavy weather, and he calls for Rudolph. Understand what I'm saying?"

In the air on the way to Milwaukee, Jackson fell to reflecting, with an almost luxurious gratification, to the huddle of reporters around him, "I made myself available to help in Atlanta, and I've done the best I could. We always had the numbers to win. I was not in charge of prioritizing those numbers, but I've done my best to arouse them where I could. Thing about urban America, the inner cities, can't stigmatize it by race and class—it's all races, a mass multi-ethnic base. It's the true Democratic base. In a macro sense, it's the base we *should* have launched from, now calling on us at the last minute here, trying to crash-land at."

At the Milwaukee airport, a haphazardly assembled caravan of taxis swept Jackson and his small entourage downtown to the campaign headquarters, where he spoke into a thicket of microphones. "I urge everybody listening within the sound of my voice to vote these remaining hours," he said. "The polls are open until eight o'clock. Vote, and keep hope alive." It was, given the hour, a rather forlorn last bugling. Jackson was then led out by the rear door of the campaign office, through a swift, dim blur of rooms and hallways filled with a shadowy milling of Party operatives, who, as they discovered Jackson rushing past them, seemed suddenly oblivious of the Dukakis campaign now collapsing across the country, and called after Jackson, "*Jes-se! Jes-se! Jes-se!*"

IN fact, Jackson had already mentally moved himself into the season lying beyond the election. "This is just the second act that's winding up here," he said while we were waiting one afternoon at a Wisconsin airport for his plane to be refuelled. "The intermediate phase. Going on to the third act now." Yet he maintained that he had not really given much thought to exactly how he would proceed after the election. "I don't go off by myself and sit down with a blank legal pad and start working out a blueprint for what I'm going to do next. The flow of events fills up that page for me." Neither, for that matter, has he ever been given to introspection. "I've never really gone back and thought about things I've done. Mean, I've just addressed one thing and then gone on to the next one. Never reflected on it all much." Indeed, Jackson is not at home apprehending things from stillness; things take on reality only in motion. Jackson himself, for that matter, is in constant, pell-mell movement, almost from the instant he wakes up every morning until he falls asleep at night—as if, should he cease motion, he would himself cease, disappear. And, in a curious way, in his endless motion time seems to have dissolved for him in its ordinary, linear sense. He has come to exist in a fuguelike simultaneity of past and present, or in a kind of time loop ever recircling, expanding in detail and circumstance but always coming back around—the years of his beginnings in Greenville, his passage through the civil-rights movement, his laboring through the seventies to deliver himself from his merely incidental noticeability into the remarkable notability he finally gained in the eighties, along with a lively anticipation of the palpable prospects ahead of him.

As Jackson travelled from rally to rally to speak for the Democratic ticket, he kept reliving moments from his own odysseys through the primaries. "In Portland once, we had eight thousand people turn out. *Oregon!* Then to Eugene, thirteen thousand. Almost all of 'em white. In Vermont, in West Virginia, people were coming to our rallies *crying*. Something was happening—they were changing. Minnesota farm rally, 7 A.M., expecting about four hundred people—*six thousand* showed up, came in school buses, trucks. They stood there singing 'We Shall Overcome' for the first time in their lives. They were so much into relating black-white for the first time, wanting to prove they were not mean-spirited, almost brought tears to my eyes."

Now, at each stop, it was as if he were engaged in a personal processional of observance and perpetuation of all that. "We're so far from where we started and so close to where we going, can't let anybody stop us now," he would cry to the crowds. "Keep hope alive!" Watching him through those weeks, one got a sense that he had, in fact, come to be absorbed into a campaign that would never really end—going on, independent, finally, of such incidentals as any particular election. In the cabin of his jet one night as it was streaking from Chicago after a long day of rallies, on the way to New York, where he would begin another round, Jackson sat slouched back in his seat, his tie off, and started quietly talking about how most other politicians retreat back into private life after a campaign defeat or the natural expiration of their public careers: "They all go back home sooner or later. That's the difference between me and them. I have no home to go back home to. This *is* my home."

DESPITE all his frets about discourtesies from the Democratic management, Jackson had been able to return after the Convention to his essential meaning, renewing his own, personal, open-ended political evangelism. Through that autumn, to gatherings in Midwestern courthouse squares and Northern factory neighborhoods, he continued to deliver those populist preachments which made up his central political testament. He took on at times a striking resemblance to the Ben Shahn sketch of King's round, bullish head orating with mouth opened wide in a roar of power from the back of his thick-packed neck. He would say, "Eight years of Reagan and Bush, more millionaires on top but millions more in poverty, thirty-five million Americans with no health insurance. Something about that's not right. More working women in poverty, more children in poverty, expansion of hunger—something not *right* about that! Makes no difference whether you black, brown, or white, when your child's hungry, it hurts the same. When there's no heat in the house, we all cold. When they close down your factory or foreclose on your farm, and comes the time they pull the plug and the lights go out, we all—we *all*—look amazingly *similar* sitting there in the dark. Yet you hear folks who don't have dental care or health care, can't buy enough groceries or pay their 'lectric bill, hear 'em talking 'bout they somehow got something in common with Reagan and Bush. Say, 'Me and Bush, we both for the flag, against crime, believe in prayer. Both us is *con-ser-va-tive*.' Naw. Naw—one of y'all is rich, and one of y'all is *po'*."

And he would move then into that incantation repeated throughout his past campaigns, which nevertheless still brought rising swells of clapping as he rolled through it once more. "Most poor people not black, they white, mostly female and young. Most poor people are not on welfare, they work. They work every day! Get up every morning, catch the *early* bus. Never seen by Bush and Quayle turning over in bed for their beauty nap. Most the poor *not* lazy, Mr. Bush. Don't be *unkind* to them—they're the common people, work *every day!* They're family farmers struggling to keep their land. They drive cabs, sweep the streets, collect our garbage. Go down in the mines to dig our coal, clean the motels you sleep in, serve your table at restaurants. *They work every day!* They care for the sick in our hospitals, wash the bodies of those in pain and with fever. Clear their bedpans. No job is beneath them! And, yet, when *they* get sick, they cannot lie in that bed they make up every day! People down in the admissions room dying 'cause they cannot

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afford to go up and lie in that bed that's waiting empty for somebody wealthy or with insurance to get sick. That is not *right*, America. We got to be a better nation than that! A nation's judged by how it treats the *least* of those in its midst. Let me tell you something. When members of Congress get sick, they go to Walter Reed. When members of the Supreme Court or the President get sick, *they* go to Walter Reed"—he held his two forefingers pointed at each other just below his chest and tightly circled them together as if briskly unspooling his phrases—"and if government-supported health care is good *enough for Congress and the Supreme* Court and the White House, then it's good enough for your house and my house, it's good enough for *everybody* in this democracy!"

Into these egalitarian proposals he was constantly transfusing an extra, crackling vigor from the Scriptures, making for a novel mixture that could be called gospel populism. "Can you imagine Jesus, for instance—he was preaching one day, big crowd, and a woman sick with an issue of blood came up behind him and reached out to touch his robe to be healed— Can you imagine Jesus turning around and taking out a clipboard and saying to her, 'Wait a minute. First, we got to fill out this form. Let's see, now. How long you been sick? You sure you *really* sick? What's your name and address? Got any children? Say you have? Well, you married? And who do you work for? How much you make? And when you get well, just what is your payment plan going to be?' No, Jesus just looked upon her suffering and *healed* her. When somebody's sick, the only moral question is not 'Where is your money?' but 'Where is your *pain*?' "

Some of the political parables Jackson improvised from the Scriptures were more innovative. In an imaginative reconstruction of the Christmas story to apply to the homeless, he declared, "Jesus wasn't sent through Herod's house, he wasn't the innkeeper's son. God sent Jesus through a poor, *homeless* couple. Father with a skill who couldn't find a job. Didn't have the right to vote. Innkeeper wouldn't let them in 'cause they couldn't pay." Not precisely the case, of course, the inn simply being full, and Mary and Joseph having merely journeyed from their home in Nazareth, where Joseph worked as a carpenter, to Bethlehem to pay their taxes. Unconfined by such textual punctilios, though, Jackson went on about "the Wise Men, middle-class businessmen who owned their own farms, owned their own sheep, but chose God over their sheep, fled their sheep to bring gifts to this homeless couple," thereby effectively fusing the Magi and the shepherds into a single delegation of conscientious burghers.

At a luncheon meeting of the Hollywood Radio and Television Society at the Beverly Wilshire Hotel, he repaired to the Bible for a spirited apologia for the tradition of liberalism, *while performing his customary* semantic riffs on the word itself: "The three Wise Men—liberals! Took their gifts to the homeless. Liberals *liberate*—that's what the word means. Liberation is inherently a *liberal* process. Moses, Jesus, they were the liberals. And Pharaoh, Herod, Pilate, ole Nero, they were the conservatives. Conservatives want to conserve it all like it is. Liberals liberate and expand what is into what it ought to be." He amplified this Scriptural hermeneutics on liberalism at other appearances: "When Jesus said to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, comfort the afflicted, those were *liberal* values. 'Come unto me, all ye who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest'—that's liberal! Grace—that's a liberal dynamic. No such thing as conservative grace. Grace is by definition a *liberatin'* business." (Sometimes he would add, deadpan, "And by the way, y'all, when Jesus came into Jerusalem the last time, he did *not* ride no *elephant* into Jerusalem. It was a donkey. Hear what I'm saying?")

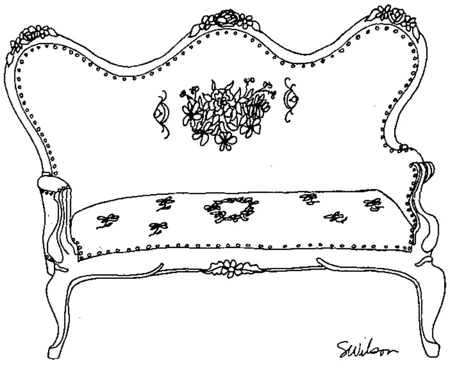
One afternoon as we were riding to an airport after a rally, Jackson said, "I do believe that I am able to exegete the Scriptures in ways that make sense to people. The Gospel is truth through personality. It's like, you know, Jesus went about doing good, speaking the truth to folks." At random moments during those campaign weeks, he offered other such expositions of his gospel populism. After a day of driving around New York, as we were on our way to Queens for a last rally, I sensed a sudden stillness behind me in the back seat, and turned to find that Jackson had nodded off amid the bawl of sirens and motorcycles. But then, as we were passing along an avenue in Brooklyn beside the East River, I heard him abruptly mumble, "The new Rome." He was looking out at lower Manhattan's corporate towers, imperially arrayed on the other side of the water. *"The new Rome," he pronounced* again, and he subsequently expanded on that proposition, in the way he has of circling back to a matter again and again, an hour later, or even sometimes a week later, to parse it further. Jackson does not so much address a question as, with successive passes of commentary, eventually surround it and engulf it. As we were riding through the Missouri countryside, he continued, "Must realize that the first reaction to the words of Jesus was terror from the politics of the day. Rome, Herod, you know, got so much power, so much sophistication—mean, Rome be *civilized*, now. But if Rome is decadent, *transform* Rome. Jesus was constantly challenging that government in the service of the people. Wasn't he? You hear very few of these vigorous popular preachers on television today, though, preaching land reclamation and debt restructuring for farmers, fair wages, social justice, equal rights for women—can't recall hearing any of 'em talking those things."

I suggested that most electronic gospelteers were in fact engaged in a social evangelism—it was just from a direction contrary to his, such as denouncing the Equal Rights Amendment by citing Paul's admonition to women to subjugate themselves to the leadership of men.

Jackson snorted. "Well, that's a— A *text* used out of *con*text is a *pre*text."

Another of his spry little verbal ripples, I observed.

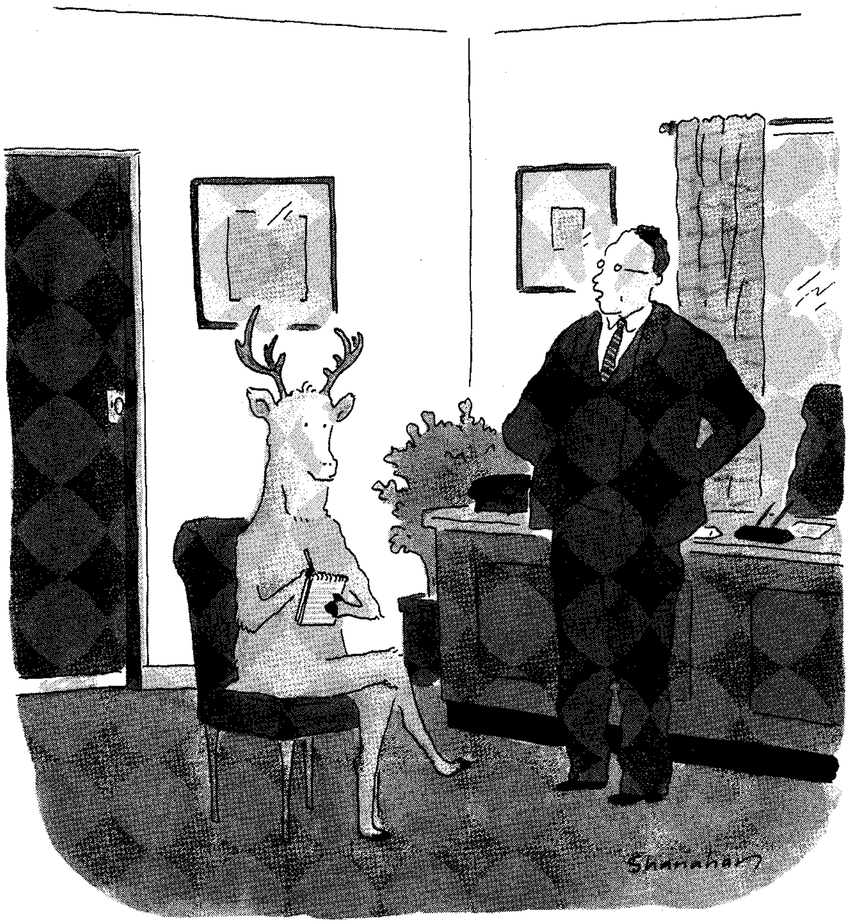
"Thank you very much," he said. "But it's also true. That's why it ripples good. But if you had an active movement in the white churches, with that evangelism connected to the daily realities of how folks actually live— Yeah, we're with the flag and we're



with the prayer business, but what about also paying workers right, what about health care for the poor? Same kind of revolution as happened in black churches in the sixties—I mean, it would change politics overnight! And, leading something like that, you could become the transistor, the connection point, between today and tomorrow. Hunh? That right? Mean, that's sort of what we been trying to do. To take what soul and spirit is left in the traditional church and translate that into the relevant current agenda." We now happened to be walking through the Los Angeles airport, amid a rush of people. "With slavery, for instance, many in the church finally came around to saying, 'They God's children not 'spose to be slaves. God ain't pleased.' That's my political principle. Is God pleased? On every question I proceed from that. Reaganomics, Star Wars, Central American policy, South Africa—might be convenient, might make us feel good, might be comfortable, might be expedient, might be profitable, might even seem political. But God *ain't pleased!* The problem in the end is not really any particular individuals or personalities but powers and principalities, like the Scriptures say. The structure of society has *got* to be challenged. So the need is leaders who see the role of government," he was elaborating further while sprawled in the undersized middle seat of a van taking him to catch a flight to St. Louis, "see the role of government as that of the Great Commission. 'Love ye one another, even as I have loved you.' Which drives right into 'Treat others as you would have them treat you. Of all these things I have told you, the law rests on this: Love one another as I've loved you.' The Gospel happens to be the most revolutionary manifesto in history. Man, *think* about it. When you start dealing in terms like forgiveness and redemption and treating the least of these like they were you yourself, that's saying something that goes way beyond left wing or right wing. Homeboy, that's *witnessin'!*"

I asked if there was not, however, some fundamental problem with aspiring to effect an essentially spiritual vision through the offices of civil power.

"Why? How come? We certainly do not want to entrust the political process to administrators who have holes in their souls." After one has spent time with Jackson, the temptation occurs to carry a small bell, like the ones on hotel reception desks, to ping whenever another of these phonetic flourishes goes by. "Anyway," he concluded. "If it's moral, it's going to be political sooner or later."



"D-e-a-r Sir."

• •

JACKSON took this political gospel equally, eclectically, to ballroom banquets and black churches, university amphitheatres and union halls. The exhortation he delivered to inner-city blacks about the social crisis of unwed teen-age mothers he would deliver, with the same energy, to a gathering of Midwestern dairy farmers, occasioning a momentary puzzlement: "If dogs can raise their puppies and cats can raise their kittens, then young men old enough to make babies must surely raise those babies that they make!" To one rally of farmers in north-central Missouri he orated on the long history of injustices that made the Voting Rights Act necessary, finally extending the act's implications, a bit inventively, to "farmers who could vote without having to pay the poll taxes." No matter. Jackson said once, "I operate according to the Gospel parable of the sower. Throw that seed out everywhere. Some of it falls on rocky ground, some the wind blows back in your face, but a lot of it falls on fertile ground and germinates. And what germinates is sufficient so as not to miss what hit the rocks and wind. Understand me?"

Through those late-autumn weeks, he suggested at times a kind of populist John the Baptist storming across the country in motorcades. Landing in the Michigan interior, on a dim, snow-blowing Sunday, he was driven amid sirens past bare beige sweeps of shorn, stippled cornfields, and on to an auditorium that was like an unfinished airplane hangar. Over its high, bleak reaches, Jackson's electronically amplified voice clangored as he declaimed, "Eight years of Reagan and Bush, more wealth concentrated in the hands of the few, more people working in poverty. Corporations taking manufacturing jobs overseas, not for better labor but cheaper labor. Asia's not taking jobs from us—the multinationals

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are taking jobs *to them.* And the loss of factory jobs overseas can't be offset with service jobs here. Far more security and pride and stability in making cars than making hamburgers, but the workers who used to make our cars now making French fries and fish sandwiches for minimum wage! Issue's not who loves the flag most. That's *silly*—we all love our country's flag, that ain't even a grownups' argument. Issue is who grew the cotton and who was the manufacturer *made* the flag. Korea and Taiwan make the flags—we get the good feeling, we get the joy, and they get the jobs!"

He landed in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, on another cold and sunless morning, and he and his entourage were carried in a bus out into the countryside along a narrow, tapering road, crossing the Chippewa River. Then, at the dairy farm where he was to speak, cars and trucks and vans and station wagons were crammed and tucked into every possible cranny around the farmhouse's muddy side yard and nearby cattle lots. "Don't worry," Jackson assured a reporter who questioned just how spirited a reception could be expected at such an unlikely site. "We gonna make something happen here." Packed inside a vast shed behind the house, in fact, was a surprisingly large multitude to find collected out of the seemingly empty reaches of fields for miles around: young couples—wives in bulky denim jackets and with their heads wrapped in scarves, their husbands beside them in rumpled khakis stuffed into buckled rubber boots—holding twisting and whimpering children; and older couples with weather-crinkled faces, the men with hands shoved deep in nylon quilted jackets zipped up to their chins, felt hats on their heads. Jackson towered above them on the back of a pickup truck, his tie stripped off in concession to the setting, and in a musk of hay dust his voice blared through the shed: "Republicans trying to play Halloween with this campaign, but Halloween's 'bout over with. Time they took off their mask! After eight years of Republicans in the White House, condominiums for the few, and hallways and alleyways for the millions homeless. Take off the mask! Gone from a creditor nation to a debtor nation, a fundamental shift in who we are in the world, banks failing—got to take off that mask now! Farm prices down, consumer prices *up!* It's not the rural farmer taking advantage of the urban consumer, it's the *corporate barracuda* taking advantage of them both! Take the mask off! Not playing Halloween any longer!"

A bedlam of whoops broke out around him.

"A kinder, gentler nation, yeah. Kinder and gentler for the corporations and merger maniacs and megaconglomerates swallowing up the family farmer and taking factory jobs overseas. Urban America looks like it's been bombed out, rural America abandoned like a plague's hit, and yet they playing us off one against the other, trying to make us think we different kinds of people, playing those ole race games with us, Willie Horton and all that, when we *need* each other. But, let me tell you, if the family farmer and urban worker, black and white, the good-hearted common people all over this country, if we should ever—watch out!—*get together,* then we sure enough *would* see a kinder, gentler nation. Take *off* that mask!"

Listening to all this, the men withdrew their thick, blunt hands from their quilted jackets and began applauding.

THE climax of a robust rally always left Jackson in a state of almost giddy exaltation. Before a brimming assembly in a black church in St. Louis, with people clustered in the aisles and along the walls, he bellowed away in a hoarsely cracking voice (it was now near the end of the campaign), his face glittering with sweat. "What kind of sick need is it not to prefer the whole personhood of a woman? *God* obviously had a high regard for women. He didn't send his only begotten son through a whirlwind or have him wash up on no beach—sent him through a *woman!* But we got people who look on women, if they work, call them unfit mothers, and, if they don't work, call them lazy—"

An answering murmur rose from the women in the congregation and began running along the pews: "Thank you, thank you."

"If a woman does work, she makes only sixty-two cents on a dollar of what a man makes. But a woman can't buy a dollar's worth of bread for only sixty-two cents—"

"*Yes, Jesse!*"

"—can't buy a dollar's worth of

milk or medicine, or heatin' oil to keep her babies warm, for only sixty-two cents!"

"*Oh, Jesse! Go, Jesse!*"

"Women who work must be *paid right*, so they can raise our *children* right!" As he waited, his face shellacked with sweat, for the tumult in the church to subside, a hand discreetly slipped a glass of water up to him, from which he took a quick sip, and then a handkerchief was handed him, and he swabbed it across his forehead and above his mouth. "But, 'course, don't hear Mr. Bush talking about any of that. Don't hear much from him about helping working mothers with fair pay and day care and— Listen, better Head Start and day care and prenatal care on the *front* side of life than welfare, jail care, and *dee*-spair on the *back* side of life! But don't hear Mr. Bush saying much about that, all he wants to talk about is Willie Horton."

More cries from the congregation: "*All right, tell it!*"

"They using those Willie Horton ads to incite psychosexual racial fears."

"*Tell 'em 'bout it!*"

"Fight crime, yes! *Yes*, Willie Horton ought to be in jail. But Oliver North—"

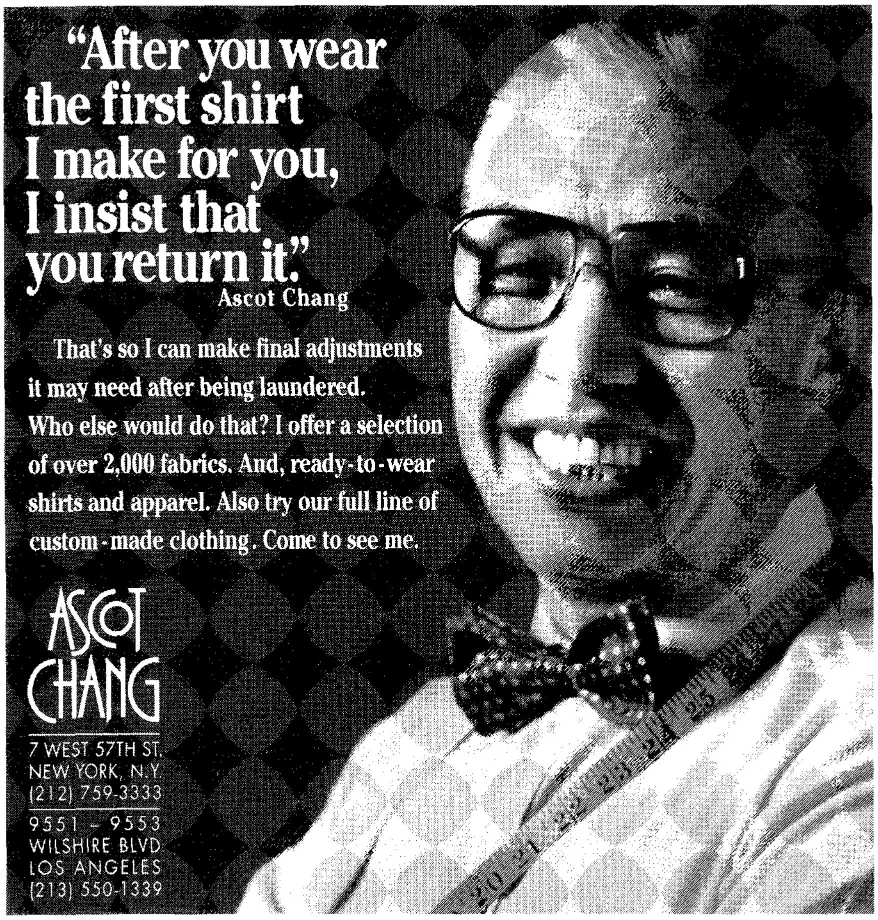
Instantly, a howl began gathering.

"And Poindexter—"

There was a rumble of stamping feet now under the ecstatic shouts. "*C'mon, Jesse, talk it, son!*"

"And McFarlane ought to be right there in the same jail with him! And, when they got there, they ought to found Nixon already sittin' there waitin' on 'em!" This set off a thundering in the church that lasted a full minute. When, at last, Jackson had finished, and began making his way from the pulpit through the throng of admirers, he seemed transported into a dazed, spinning euphoria. Heading down a stairway to the street floor of the church, with a huge wake of people trampling down after him, he suddenly halted at the bottom, immediately arresting with a tremendous jostle the entire procession all the way up two flights of stairs behind him, and announced, "Wait a minute. This ain't my raincoat. Got on somebody else's coat here." To the people massed on the staircase above him he happily called out, "I can see the headlines tomorrow, y'all. 'Jesse Jackson arrested in St. Louis for stealing raincoat in church.' "

Jackson delighted in the crowds at



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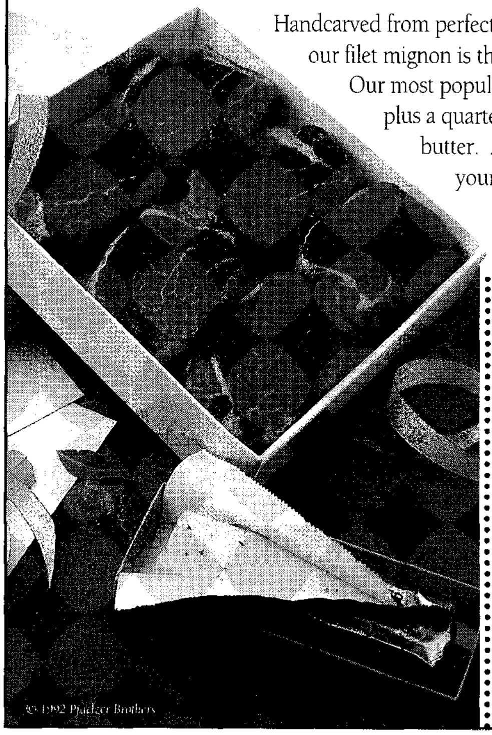

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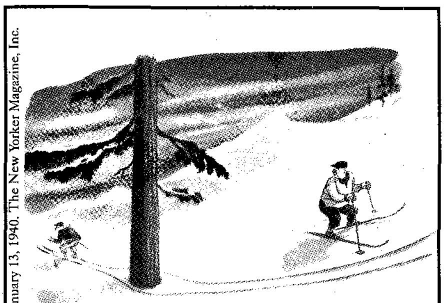
these rallies no less than they seemed to delight in him. What soon struck one was how, though he was no longer an active contender, he yet drew large and effusive gatherings almost everywhere he went, touched off combustions of enthusiasm that seemed strangely impervious to his final failure in the primaries. Arriving for a rally at a college coliseum or a city auditorium, he would climb out of his car while fans converged around him with wails and squeals. To follow him inside to the rally was to experience secondhand something of what must be the heady flush of a rock star's entrance: first proceeding with his shoal of attendants down a back corridor in a hurrying clatter of heels, then passing through the hushed, hidden, barnlike glooms of backstage, meanwhile nattily shooting his cuffs, slipping a hand inside his coat to smooth down his tie, and giving a quick little side twist of his chin to settle his neck more comfortably in his high collar, and then walking out in a sudden vast openness and blaze of light and cheering—a sensation that for Jackson must have been each time like a kind of psychic rebirth.

Jackson appeared, with rather deft timing, for an outdoor rally at the University of California at Los Angeles the morning after Dukakis's calamitous second debate with Bush was televised from there. As Jackson walked toward the rally site, rifflings of applause began to spread ahead of him through an immense throng sprawled over a plaza under eucalyptus trees. A voice rang from a public-address system: "All right, everybody! It's time! It's time!" A roar swelled through the crowd. "The greatest freedom fighter in America—Jesse Jackson!"

Jackson skipped up onto a small stage, grinning and slinging his thumb high over his head. It was as if Dukakis's starchy performance in the debate the night before had invested Jackson with a new panache. "Got some notes here," he said, withdrawing a folded sheaf of papers from his inside coat pocket. "But I don't need to use any notes." He stuffed the papers back into his coat. "I got *convictions*. I know what I'm talking about." The roar rose again over the plaza. It was an altogether rousing morning, more like some festival of mutual celebration than a rally. Jackson finished with "America is bigger than one race, it's bigger than one religion, it's bigger than one class, and it's far bigger than the vision of George Bush or the simple comprehension of one J. Danforth Quayle," and he then posed his own millennial ambition "to keep America expanding, to take America beyond racism, beyond prejudice, beyond anti-Semitism, beyond sexism, beyond *all* hatred, beyond fear, beyond poverty, beyond war," which brought yet again that mass chant, surging in a great surf of voices over the plaza: "*Jes-se! Jes-se! Jes-se!*"

Jackson has entered that dimension as a public figure in which he is commonly referred to by masses around the country by his first name. It is a kind of casual folk intimacy achieved by few politicians. After a rally, his car would ease through people calling to him, "Love you, Jesse! Take care, now, Jesse!" Their hands would scramble through the window to him, and he would briefly clasp the fingers while calling back, "Bless you! Love you!"

THE interplay of energies that pulsed between Jackson and his crowds was one that, in more than twenty years of reporting, I had encountered with only two other political figures: George Wallace and, in his last years, Robert Kennedy. I was to hear repeatedly about Jackson, both from supporters and from unenchanted observers, what was once heard so often about Wallace: "It's just that he's so much more *alive* than the others. People at least feel something real in front of them." But, more tellingly, the popular exhilarations through which Jackson moved during those final weeks of his own alter-campaign called to mind an observation offered years ago by then Senator John Tunney, of California, about Robert Kennedy: "His sense of politics was physical, in that he knew you had to throw yourself out there among the people again and again, to be directly heard and seen and touched and sort of handled and pushed around by them. Because the malaise in the country is people feeling isolated and alone in a disappearance of any large, embracing sense of community, feeling decisions about their lives are being made by faceless strangers and processes beyond their control. So there's a huge hunger to connect to an actual physical presence—a tribal



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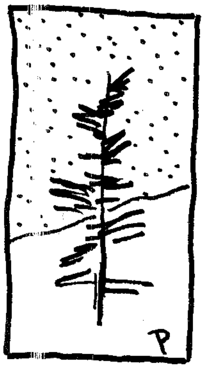
leader, really, with that kind of personal relationship between him and the people—who can give them a sense of meaning and value as a community again. They need to feel that he has almost recklessly, with a willingness to take extraordinary risks, given himself over completely to that, and to what he believes in, which answers what they believe in. It's something almost primitive, mystic."

During his speeches, Jackson seems to be laboring actually to merge himself somehow with the people assembled before him. "I am of you!" he will cry, and "I *am* you!" And more often than not he ends his rallies with "I love you all! Love you very much!" At stray moments as he was travelling about, he would muse aloud on how he conjures the high pitch of personal communion between him and his crowds—describing it with the curious detachment of one who has removed himself from the event to observe it and narrate it as if he were a spectator of what he was doing. "Truth, like electricity, is all around us, but we have very few conduits for it," he said on one occasion. "What you do is plug the people into your socket, they give you that electricity, and you give them heat and light. Lot of people say, you know, 'He's a great speaker.' Well, speaking is a result of feeling, of *thinking*—you *thought* of what to say. So when people say, 'He sho does talk good,' ain't just talkin', it's a *brain*. I got a brain that sends messages to my jaw muscles. I be feeling and *thinking* what I'm talking. I work, and work, and work to say that thing right, spin that thing just right, so when people hear it, they—" He blew out a soft whoosh of breath—*whew!*—while yanking himself upright in his seat, wide-eyed, as if from a sudden shock. "It's like that. I struggle hard to conceive it as a *live* thing."



He went on about this some while later: "When I first came back home from the seminary, I was asked to speak at church, and my grandmother and some of the older folk came up afterward. 'That was a nice speech, young man, very nice speech.' They meant the words were. Words came out nice. That's what it was, was a speech. But as you go on and begin to really catch hold of it, you start hearing them say, 'Well, now! You spoke to my soul. You burned me this morning.' Got to do more than *speak*. You can get informed listening to a newsman or weatherman. You got to be moving toward the heart of the matter, got to burn people's souls. You got to get *inside* of people. That's where it all is. And you can't get inside of them unless you open *yourself* up to be got inside *of*. Follow what I'm saying? The key to other people's hearts is finding the key to yours. Got to give to receive, got to open up yourself to get inside somebody else."

Several weeks later, after the election, as we were flying to Africa, he resumed these reflections: "You always searching for where the people are. I come to a town, I be talking to the driver on the way in from the airport, talk with the maids at the hotel, the cooks, sometimes even their children. If you speaking from their concerns, you pretty much on track. 'Cause they live their lives on the ground, they have the depth. What's good for them is pretty much what's good for the whole world, you can usually count on that. They *are* the base, the bottom line. An', an', an' "—he stammered in eagerness—"an' they do have an ungrammatical profundity, they do have a way in their pealing tones—they be saying something, you know? And I like to capture that and turn it into the music that's really there, find those common, universal chords in it. Because, get right down to it, most people's lives is not about ideology, left wing, right wing, any of that—they hurt, hope, rejoice mostly about the same personal things. For instance, feel good when their children are growing up right, don't want broken hearts because their children went astray. Best fuel for your engine is the spirit fuel of folks struggling for those simple, decent, basic things in life. When you stay in touch with that music, that rhythm, you speak with authenticity. Because you're *into* it. I couldn't get up there and talk if I hadn't been fighting to keep close to that. Keeps you real. Keeps you out of the abstract. It's what gives color to your language. Gives the bass note to your soul. Deep speaks to deep. The real speaks to the real."

As a result, Jackson said, "people

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are responding to our movement, not because they got a membership card but because they know I'll address those longings they got. Everywhere I go, they always giving me notes, hand 'em to me at airports, slip 'em under my door at the hotel. 'Please say something about this.' They can't turn to the government, can't turn to Congress, 'cause those folks are already too locked into the arrangement." He likes to recount that "when I speak at these big Democratic banquets, five-hundred-dollar-a-plate deals, I say, 'Maybe instead of a thousand Democrats here at five hundred dollars a head, we ought to have fifty thousand people at ten dollars a head. Can we really use means like this to win leadership of those who set our tables tonight, who'll change our beds in the morning, who drove us here from the airport? Can they see any real distinction between us gathered here for a five-hundred-dollar meal and those we tell them we're battling against in their behalf? Somehow, in this process the humble people, the disregarded common people, must have their place at our table.' And, you know, while I'm saying all this at one of these banquets, the janitors and maids and cooks will always come to the doors along the sides to listen, and I'll say, 'They standing over there right now, and they're welcome, yeah. They know instinctively what *all* you must know. If I'm welcome, *they* welcome.'

"It's a covenant," Jackson expounds more largely, with that unfailing urge of his to move toward the unabashedly operatic. "Somehow all these people, workers, students, farmers, they seem to feel, for some reason that I do not fully comprehend"—he confides this now in a sudden low murmur of awed reverence—"they feel they have stock in me. Whether they'll even actually vote for me, they still feel that whatever it is I represent to them, it's something they are shareholders in. And I'm obligated to respond. I sense all these expectations that I must honor. Everywhere I go, they expect so much of me, they pull out of me my spirit and energy, just—*pull it out of me.* When I get up to speak, I see in their faces this—this *belief.* That I can make a difference for them. And that makes me believe I *can* make a difference. And, I mean, who else is really out there? Who is their hero? Who is their political hero? That's why they so *ripe* for us, if we'll just argue their case."

During the last week of the campaign, Jackson landed one afternoon at a little wind-slapped airfield near Columbia, Missouri, and set out in a van, with a few reporters, a local Democratic worker, and a farmer named Roger Allison, for a rally at Allison's parents' farm, about forty-five miles away. The van was trailed by a sizable caravan of cars, with a state-highway-patrol escort. Allison, a heftily built man with a cornbread-plain face, was a veteran supporter of Jackson's, going back to the formation of what must have seemed Jackson's unlikeliest alliance—with beleaguered farmers—during a troubled season of foreclosures in 1983. "People felt a little hopeless and apathetic until Reverend Jackson started coming out and firing us up," Allison told the reporters. Actually, in those tense and harrowed times it was an alliance not without a certain incendiary potential. One of Jackson's first farm audiences, in Great Bend, Kansas, was composed mostly of members of the Posse Comitatus, a kind of reactionary vigilante agrarian equivalent of the Weathermen. Then, at a protest rally in 1984, farmers arrived wearing sacks over their heads, and Jackson learned only afterward that they wore the sacks to avoid being identified by farm-bureau officials. Jackson said, "I told them I didn't mind as long as it was daytime, and they wore sacks, not sheets." Allison, sitting beside Jackson, chortled at the recollection, and Jackson clapped him on the knee. "But our people have always had more in common than other folks supposed—right, Roger? We've both felt locked out. Exploited and discarded. People saying about the family farmer exactly what they say about unemployed urban blacks. 'Something's wrong with them. If they worked hard like me, wouldn't be in all that trouble.' We've found out we kin. Even got common religious values." Jackson ranged on, a bit more fancifully. "What they sing in church here, we were singing the same songs down in Greenville, South Carolina. Very similar cultures, actually. Similar music—Charley Pride, Ray Charles." Eventually, Jackson had begun organizing his own sort of cultural exchanges, having black mayors and the congregations of black churches travel out to farm rallies, bringing farmers in to services at black churches. "By coming together like that, we began seeing our common ground. We both in a class struggle against an economic aristocracy."

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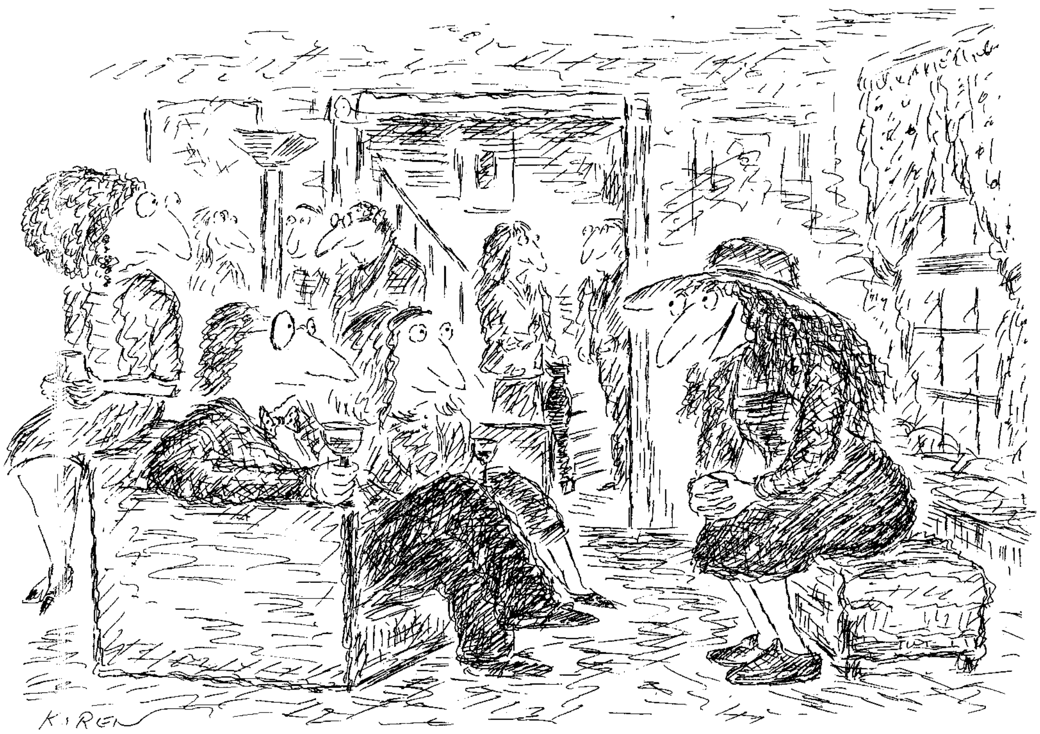
"Reverend Jackson's expanded our consciousness out here about a hundred and fifty per cent," Allison declared to the reporters in the van. "I have no interest now in having what I raise go to agribusiness exporters like Cargill to bust farmers in Thailand. We just never thought about those things before. And I have a relationship now with the civil-rights movement in St. Louis and Kansas City, whereas I was afraid to even think that way before."

At one point, Allison called Jackson's attention to a distant farmhouse, all its windows darkened in the dimming afternoon, and mentioned the name of its occupant, whom Jackson knew. "He's still living out there," Allison said. "But he's about to go under. He won't hardly ever leave that house now. Just sits out there."

"Well, I'll call him tonight," Jackson said. "See what we can do to maybe hep him, cheer him up some." Jackson told the reporters, "Big, strong guy. 'Bout a size-twenty neck. Big ole slumped shoulders. He looks like every stereotype you've ever—mean, he makes Archie Bunker look like he's from Oxford University. For him now to be just *broken*— Rural poverty, *godamighty!* People everywhere out here are just *suffering.* Cold, hungry, just *die!*"

"Well, ole boy back there," Allison said. "Whether he makes it or not, he'll at least know what happened to him. His whole outlook has changed quite a bit." He turned to the reporters. "Lot of people, their lives have been changed for the rest of their lives by what Reverend Jackson's had to say."



"I'm in herbs—celebrating the ancient link between women and plants."

• •

"See," Jackson said, suddenly pitching forward in his seat. "We reaching beyond our base in the black community. It's as much a new alliance of cultures as it is black and white." Once again, he eagerly recited the diverse constituencies that would make up his envisioned populist majority, not only those same "common folks" of Wallace's fond litanies ("cabdrivers, truck drivers, waitresses, plant workers") but also Jackson's more cosmopolitan and ecumenical overlay: "Environmentalists, peace activists, women's-rights groups." Jackson seemed to compose this coalition in the air simply by sounding its various elements, tossing his hands inward as if assembling an invisible salad. "*Cultures* coming together. City and country. Workers and college students. Young and elderly. *That's* our party's future. We not dividing the Party, we *renewing* it. We reviving the progressive wing of the Party. We expanding and *delivering* the Party from its past schisms."

As Jackson went on invoking these large prospects, the caravan of cars followed along behind us in the deepening dusk through a vacant countryside, flowing up and down a narrow road through gentle hills with police lights flashing, the occasional approaching car quickly pulling to the other side of the road in the apparent assumption that we were a funeral cortège.

"I don't know how long it'll take, but I know it's just a matter of these pieces coming together," Jackson said. "Only need a master sewer to connect all the patches. All of a sudden, there's a big opening to people who, historically, been conditioned to be afraid of me. That's why this flower keeps on unfolding. Why a new majority is dawning."

As Jackson enthused on, it was as if a subtle amnesia had infiltrated the van, in which one forgot at moments that a real Presidential race also happened to be under way right then across the country. "You never quite know when these social births are going to take place. Fact, fact, it's like that concept 'in the fullness of time.' That whole dialectic of a man and a woman and their fullness of time. It's some combination of the fullness of man's time and the fullness of God's time, in some explosive convergence, for which you can be the instrument, the agent. But you got to be prepared to catalyze that moment. When the moment comes, when the moment is pregnant, and you ready, it can't be stopped. And there *is* a moment here."

I later asked Jackson if, after all the benevolent social exertions of government since Roosevelt, the Reagan Presidency had not reflected a popular backwash of moral exhaustion and disillusionment with the idea of governmental intercession to rectify inequities and to actively work good—a disaffection with the kind of governmental altruism, in short, about which he was evangelizing.

"Not at all," he said. "The nation will respond because it *needs* to do good. Everybody wants to be good, even those who are often not good. The rich and powerful want, when they die, somewhere in their obituary that they cared for the poor, built a wing of the church. Even the rich tyrant will say, 'I'm gonna relate to you poor folks, I'll build some houses for you, I'm not just powerful and smart, see. I'm good. In addition to getting profits, I do extras. I'm *good*.' Conscience. Never underestimate the force of that, the desire to be good. Mean, people are finally driven to that which you finally can't live, can't live with"—his words were now hectically scrambling after his mind's rush for the notion—"with being without. Goodness. That's why right is might in the long run. You may be powerful but never be good, but if you're good you can't *help* but be powerful. 'Cause there's a *power* in goodness—great, great power. Political strength comes out of moral authority. That's why my biggest threat when I began in '84 was that I came out of a movement whose strength was its moral right. Not money, not organization, not status, not cunning—simply its *moral right*. And that became very difficult for our opponents to counter."

Now, nearing the rally at the Allisons' farm, Jackson said, "People have an amazing capacity, actually, to rise to the occasion once the reality is laid out there for them. Whenever America sees the *real* deal, actually sees a wrong—like the homeless, like the famine in Ethiopia, like South Africa's

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racist system—they'll say, 'Naw, now, naw, we not goin' with that.' You can get enough numbers of weapons systems to make America stronger, but I'm convinced the way to win friends and elections both is you get enough *people* wanting to make America *better*. That's our strongest national defense. Besides, people ought to love each other just because it's a good feeling. Just like people all over the country could fall in love with them whales trapped in that ice up in Alaska—how come we can't fall in love with each other that way, too? What's happening where we going now, way out here in the middle of nowhere, is that you going to find people working on that. Working on being better people. Now, I think that that's a big deal. And whatever happens in the election Tuesday night can *not* defeat that. All the powers of the system and maneuverings of the Party establishment cannot— I mean, this thing we started cannot be *stopped*."

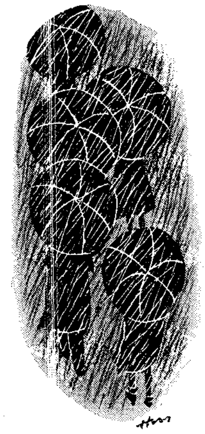
The van finally pulled off the highway and up a short, steep drive to the farmhouse, where a substantial crowd had gathered in the side yard under a low, smoky sky, everyone heavily muffled against an icy wind. Jackson addressed them from a flatbed trailer. "Don't let anybody ever set us against each other again. . . . Our strongest defense starts in our hearts. Love one another, that's what'll keep America strong." It amounted more or less to a continuation of his discourse in the van, prompting one to wonder fleetingly if, after so many years of his moving among multitudes and public occasions, there any longer existed for Jackson an inner sense of difference between the personal and the mass moment—if, in fact, he was left with any private personality at all.

In the stunning cold, though, his speech wound up being somewhat abbreviated, and after finishing it Jackson retreated expeditiously into the house, into a warm kitchen with steamed windows and rich savors of fried chicken and coffee and yeasty baked bread. Much of the crowd piled in after him, quickly filling the kitchen and a small adjoining parlor, and Jackson, finding all these folks so densely crammed about him after his oratory outside, could not resist addressing them again, in a kind of extensive postscript to his speech. Standing behind the oilcloth-covered kitchen table with a yellow plastic bowl of apples set in its precise center, he seemed to bulk overlarge in these snug rooms, his head near the ceiling, his voice too big and reverberant for such an enclosed space. Over the small squealing of several babies, his pulpiteering delivery was accompanied by an under chorus of "All right! Amen! Say it! Praise God, yes!" in Baptist Wednesday-prayer-meeting fashion. He concluded with "Now, we do have all these rights in America, but we also have the very basic right to eat homemade rolls and chicken," and he quickly settled himself at the table to do just that, with two-handed gusto. When he was done, he stood and announced that he wanted to conduct a parting prayer, and the people joined hands in a line twining through the kitchen and the parlor. "Father!" he called out over the bowed heads. "We all live in the same world. We are all the sheep of your pasture. All over this world tonight, may we study war no more. May all the world know that peace you promised, when the lions and lambs lie down to rest together." After pronouncing his "Amen," he boomed, "Friends, we got to go to St. Louis now!"

Back in the van, travelling through full darkness now, Jackson began effusing, again with that odd little instant shift into removed assessment. "People in that house, you see how they changing their lives? Every time I get groups like that responding to me, they breaking through ancient cultural barriers. Fact, more you get into this thing, the more you realize that black comes in many shades. But those folks back there are reaching out across every conceivable line—racial lines, class lines, background. That's what I mean about you have to call this authentic, as opposed to political, *beyond* political. It's, it's"—he breathed—"*so real*."

WITH all Jackson's ebullience that evening about the racial conciliations he assumed he was bringing to pass, it was only some days later that I ventured to ask him whether he was aware of how profoundly he continued to affront a far from negligible number of other whites—how much they still perceived him as subversive, devious, ominous—and whether in the end he thought that it might not turn out to be precisely the matter of race that could cause his whole mission to miscarry.

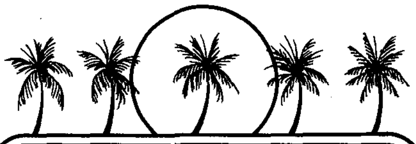
In response, Jackson blinked several times, and pondered dourly for several minutes. I suddenly had an obscure sense that the question had somehow hurt him. He finally proposed, softly, "Well, it's a cynical view of life that white people aren't capable of moving beyond that. I know that truth has a penetrating power. I've seen too many white people respond to truth in a wholesome way to assume it doesn't. Like when I spoke to this rally of G.E. workers in Cicero, these two white ladies walked up afterward, kind of edged closer and closer, you know, and finally one reached out to me and I reached out to her and embraced her, and she started to weep. She said"—relating this, Jackson's voice sank to a low whisper of amazement—"said, 'Our husbands are standing over there, they're a little ashamed to come over here, but we need our jobs so bad, *please* don't let them close this plant. At our age, we can't get no retraining. We ain't got no place else to go. Know this is kind of strange coming from us, but you 'bout the only hope we got left.'" Jackson seemed to have moved himself in telling this story, and he paused to clear his throat. "Or, or like this speaker once said introducing me to a group of unemployed Du Pont workers in Chattanooga, 'Which y'all rather have—a white enemy or a black friend?' I mean, when I decided to run for President I know some white people said, 'He's crazy, he's dangerous, he's stunting around, he's an egomaniac'—but other white people said, 'Well, now, wait a minute, here. He's making sense. I think I'm for him.' That number, by 1988, had tripled. So I'm not pessimistic about what can happen in time, about white people's inability in some inherent way to respond to what is good for them and *who* is good for them."



In truth, as Jackson makes his way about in public he is approached by what seems a surprisingly large number of white admirers who eagerly announce that they voted for him. Proceeding recently through the Los Angeles airport, he encountered a covey of white matrons who instantly flurried around him, one burbling, "We *all* voted for you." Jackson enfolded them collectively in a massive hug. "Y'all so *special*. Bless you," he said, and they chimed back, "God bless *you*!" A minute or two later, another white woman slipped up to him—a slight, pale woman, with untidy hair—and thinly sang, "I just got to shake your hand, I'm so proud to meet you. You're a great man," and Jackson responded, "Awright, dear, thank you, now." A moment later, she reappeared with her husband and small son. "I just had to bring them over. It's not every day we get to meet a great leader," she said, and she gently eased her son, with her palm on his back, toward Jackson. He beamed down on the boy, who was perhaps five. "Hi, baby! Wanna give me a hug?" He reached down for the boy. "C'm'ere on up, is how you do that thing." But the boy recoiled from Jackson's huge, outstretched hands, twisting away and scampering a few steps off, his back turned to the whole scene. "Say he's a little scared, and everything," Jackson said. "Probably just woke up, or something." He took a step forward and leaned farther down toward the boy. "Hey, Mister. You ain't no baby, you a big fella now, aren't you?" But the boy could not be charmed even into facing Jackson. "A little shy," Jackson mumbled, to no one in particular. But he still did not want to give it up, and pursued the boy. "Hey, buddy, c'mon, gimme a hug now." When Jackson stalked him around a column, the boy took off. "Gettin' away from here, ain't he?" Jackson chuckled, a bit flatly. "Guess that's one I ain't quite got yet." The mother said, "I don't know what's wrong with him. He always gets so excited seeing you on television," and her husband declared, "Well, I hope we're going to get the chance to vote for you again. We've voted for you both times you've run."

They hurried off to retrieve their son, and I remarked to Jackson that, if all the whites had voted for him who were now professing they had, the puzzlement was why he hadn't won. "Good many of them probably did," he said. "Some of 'em would have, but couldn't quite bring themselves this time. Next time, though, watch—most of 'em will."

But, whatever cross-cultural racial



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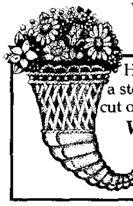

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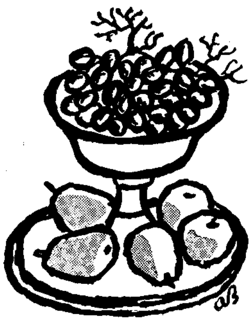
concords Jackson's campaigns may have elicited, certain dissonances still lingered. When, as the Dukakis-Bentsen campaign was ending, his party was picked up late at night at the Des Moines airport, to be transported some fifty miles to the little country town of Greenfield—Jackson had chosen it as his campaign headquarters for the '88 Iowa caucuses—the driver of one van, a young Greenfield businessman, politely confided to the journalists riding with him, "There're still a lot of people around who just don't know exactly how to take his style of speaking. It's a little too much like a revival meeting. People out here don't think their politicians ought to—well, *be* like that. Sort of preaching, the way he does."

Nevertheless, at a rally the next morning in Greenfield's courthouse square, the reception was loudly convivial and neighborly. Jackson's first visit to Greenfield had been back in 1987, during his early and singularly lonesome excursions into Iowa, a state with a population almost ninety-seven per cent white. He had been scheduled to speak at the United Methodist Church in Greenfield on the evening, it was belatedly realized, of the telecast of the Super Bowl game, and, though his staff urged him to cancel the appearance, he made the drive from Des Moines anyway, through a January night with the temperature around fifteen degrees. Entering Greenfield, and still a mile from the church, he noticed a line of cars parked along the side of the road, and when he reached the church he discovered some eight hundred townsfolk waiting for him there. He was so elated that later in the evening he decreed that Greenfield would be the center for his statewide effort over the following months. Now, with his fondness for symbolic circle-closings, he had returned on the last day of the Presidential campaign, a gray morning under a dim sky seeming to promise snow. As he stood in a neat, crisp pale-cream raincoat on a platform rigged over the courthouse steps, his amplified voice racketed over the square. "I was born in Greenville, South Car'lina, but I was born again in Greenfield, Iowa," he began, to cheers from the crowd spread over the lawn all the way to the sidewalk. When he had finished, a woman standing among a herd of children gathered near the platform called up to Jackson, "They want you to talk about your grandmother's quilt!" It was a little personal fable of Jackson's, related by him in his oration at the 1988 Democratic Convention, which they had obviously also heard here in Greenfield more than once. "Grandmama's quilt?" Jackson said. "Awright, then, y'all come closer." He knelt down on the edge of the platform. "All y'all c'mon up here real close now." And to the children collected below him in a small pond of rapt uplifted faces he told the story again. "One winter when I was a little boy, living in this humble little house without any heat, we couldn't afford a blanket. So my grandmother had to make us a quilt, or else we'd have froze. All we had, though, was pieces of old cloth—wool, gabardine, croker sack. My grandmother gathered all those patches and pieces, and when she finished sewing them together it made a big quilt that covered us and kept us warm." The children gazed up at him, transfixed. "And *that's like America. It's not a blanket* made out of just one cloth. It's a great quilt made out of many patches—urban patch, rural patch, poor patch, affluent patch, black patch, white patch, different-colored patches. All held together by common threads—threads of fairness, understanding, tolerance, concern. Just like my grandmother sewed that quilt together with love and caring." The children applauded, the whole crowd applauded, and Jackson then stood and led the children through his familiar closing refrain, the crowd shrilly repeating each phrase after him like a Sunday-school class repeating verses of Scripture after their teacher: "Save the farmers! Save the workers! Save the children! Save the teachers!" He concluded with what could be his own, personal fundamental text: "I *am* somebody! If my mind can conceive it, and my heart can believe it, I *know* I can achieve it!"



Before leaving, Jackson took a stroll along the square's surrounding gallery of aged brick buildings—Turner's Department Store, Mather Pharmacy, Farm Credit Services, Sears' Authorized Catalogue Sales—passing nothing but white faces, clustered in the doorways, and greeting them with "Hey, there, sweetie!" and "Good to see you, ole buddy!" and "How you doin', dear?" They chorused back with a cordiality that was notable, as was the entire reception that morning in Greenfield, in that it seemed utterly oblivious of Jackson's race. Jackson stepped at last into Toad's Café, a narrow eatery of minimal décor, and leaned across the counter to buss a waitress. An instant later, the proprietor heaved out from the kitchen in a baggy apron and, arms akimbo, shouted to Jackson, "Where were you this morning? I was gonna fix your grits for you."

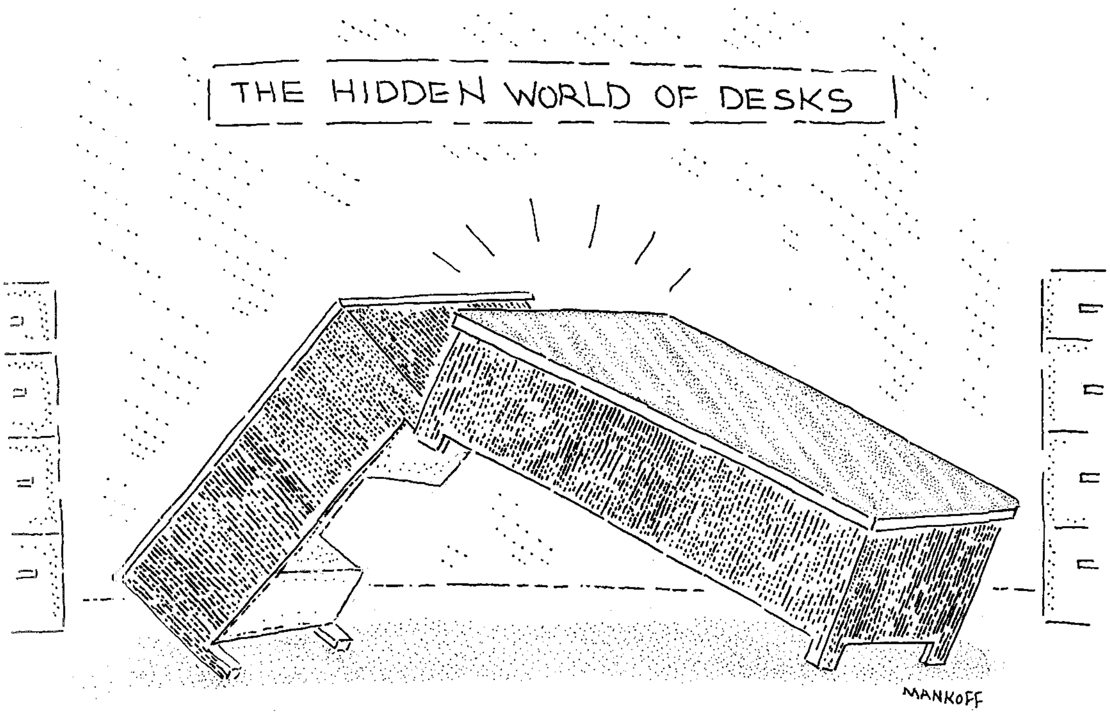

THE HIDDEN WORLD OF DESKS
MANKOFF

Fig. 1 MALE MAHOGANIES CLASHING DURING THE MATING SEASON.

Jackson said, "Got tied up. Next time. Next time."

The proprietor snuffled. "Tied up. Well, anyway, we got your—" Before he could finish, a portly woman appeared beside him and held out to Jackson a huge jar of orange juice. "Aw, mercy me," Jackson said. "Missed my grits but got my juice. Put it in a sack for me, honey. I got to get on down the road." He flung one arm high. "Bye-bye, everybody, love you all, be back 'fore long." And he turned to the door with a low cackling of delight.

ON Election Day itself, Jackson voted in Chicago, arriving early in the morning with a group of reporters at his neighborhood polling place. After a glance at the voters already gathered there, he declared, "It's a good sign when you got a long line"—hitting the ground rhyming, as it were. Through the rest of the day, as the nation was choosing between Bush and Dukakis, Jackson pressed on with his personal campaign, flying to Wisconsin, then to Minnesota, then back to Wisconsin, all the while receiving, with what seemed only a curiously incidental interest, the scattered indications of what was taking shape across the country. It was after nightfall when he got back to Chicago, landing at a small private terminal at Midway Airport. In its lobby, again surrounded by reporters, he halted in his answer to one question to catch a report, on a nearby television set, that projected Bush the overwhelming winner, but he noted this news with only a brief, idle regard, as if it were merely some parenthetical happening. He was then driven downtown to the Midland Hotel, where the networks had set up broadcast posts in various rooms, and there, in a round of interviews through the rest of the evening, he passed for a time out of all the loud weltering of crowds in coliseums and town squares, and into the electronic isolation of television. Suddenly, he seemed stunned by a stupendous exhaustion. He had by now little more than a ghost of his voice left, and an aide kept bringing him tea and honey as he was led from one interview to another. Behind his sluggishly laboring drawl and low-lidded stare, he seemed momentarily to have completely drifted away.

Early the next morning, though, he was back in full swing, going to Washington first to address a conference of international financiers and then to appear at a public ceremony, conducted by the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of Kristallnacht. And that evening he met with two advisers for a strategy session that lasted deep into the night.

"YOU realize Democrats came out of that Atlanta Convention with a seventeen-point lead in the polls?" Jackson observed several days later. "Yet somehow somebody managed to lose the game. How come?"

We were sitting at the kitchen table in his mother's home down in Greenville, on the evening of a community celebration, to be held at the Ramada Hotel, of her sixty-fifth birthday. The house was mobbed with people—neighbors, old friends, local and state politicians—and arrayed across the dining-room table for all those callers was a buffet of fried chicken, ham, macaroni and cheese, rice and gravy, green beans long simmered in fatback, a sweet-potato casserole. From this bountiful Southern spread Jackson had heaped his plate and taken it into the relative quiet of the kitchen, where, on a television set on the counter beside him, a football game was in progress. Jackson's grandmother—a small,

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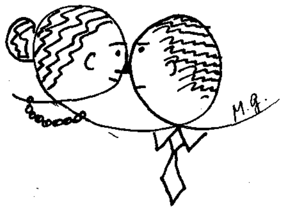
sprightly cricket of a lady, in her eighties—had followed us in to watch us as we ate. She had proudly announced earlier that Jackson had been born in her bed, and, "when he came, he looked 'bout as big as he is now." All his present large effects and circumstances, including the retinues of strangers he periodically trailed into the house, were clearly still a thing of fascination for her. She interrupted his dilations on the election to ask me, "And where *you* from?"

"What I'm saying is," Jackson kept on, trying to ignore the digression, "after the Convention, they ran away from the issues and coalition that could have kept that seventeen-point lead. Got a Southerner on the ticket, but they wouldn't have *me* on the ticket. Understand what I'm saying?"



His grandmother broke in again to ask me, "You gettin' enough to eat? We got more food out there."

"Where's Mama?" Jackson now asked her, a bit stiffly. "Hadn't you gotten yourself anything to eat yet?"

She replied, "I ain't got the *ti-i-ime*," singing the word, and did not budge.

I asked Jackson how, without the theatre of a national campaign for the next few years, he would contrive to avoid slipping into a kind of indistinct limbo. "Be testifying," he said. "Witnessing. Requests are coming to us all the time." But one group he did not expect to be invited to witness to, he noted, was a gathering of Democratic Party stewards the next weekend in Phoenix. "Just be the state chairs there," he said crisply. "Others in the, you know, the political family." And he abruptly got up from the table to rinse out his glass rather overvigorously under the sink faucet.

Some weeks later, as we were riding through south Los Angeles, he said he no longer felt any real need for the approval or the acceptance of the Party's proprietorship. "I've paid those dues, see? I've graduated from that school. We at a new stage of development now. I'm all for working with the Party, but the test of a relationship is reciprocity. I've travelled more miles and registered more voters than any other Democrat in history. I've done more for the Party than the Party's ever done for me. The Party did not help me get my seven million votes, but in '86 I helped the Party keep the Congress and regain the Senate, by their own admission. The law of reciprocity ought to apply. I'm the one who went into those states to win them and win congressional districts during our campaigns. The Democratic Party leaders from those places are indebted to me for registering new voters to help them regain the Senate. I'm not indebted to them for going against the will of their people by not supporting me, even though I won their districts. Damn right, I've got a lot of reciprocity coming. The Party needs me more than I need it."

Almost obsessively now, Jackson seemed to celebrate what he took to be his hard-won legitimacy. "I got seven million votes," he kept repeating. "Seven *million*. Nobody else in the field now—no senator, no congressperson, no governor, certainly no D.N.C. member—can bring to the table seven million people who voted for him. That's a compelling, objective number—not just theory or rhetoric but a compelling *happening*." He was constantly noting how he had finally come to be taken seriously, with whatever reluctance, by some major political players: "Once people began to respond, elected officials and those who wanted to get elected began to come our way to get validation. Pressures began to shift to congressmen and other leaders to support me. They began trying to catch up with their people."

During those weeks, throughout all his professions of having finally acquired a national authenticity with his Presidential campaigns, only now and then did I gingerly intrude references to certain liabilities still trailing him—liabilities left over from his past as a free-form political entrepreneur. Memories persisted of his claim, blurted out soon after King was shot, in 1968, that he had held the dying leader in his arms—a claim that has since been widely discounted as a garishly opportunistic falsehood. There remained the troubling matter, from his initial Presidential outing, in 1984, of the "Hymie town" remarks, and then, in his strangely baffled pain at the furor they produced, his reluctance to repudiate the all too quick and eager vituperative support of Louis Farrakhan. There

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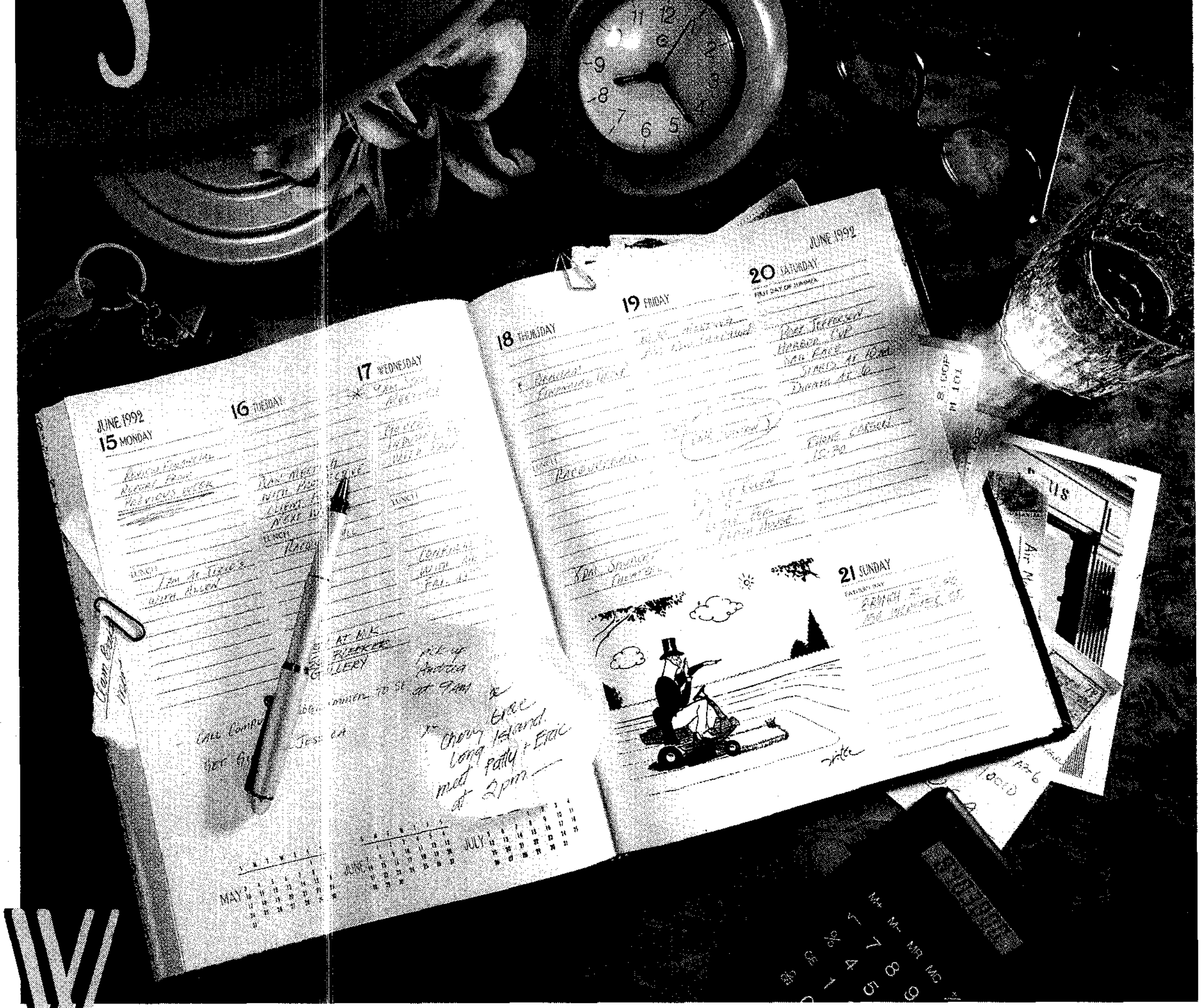

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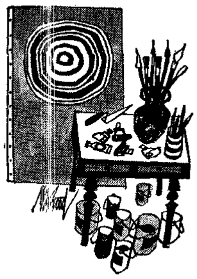
was considerable suspicion about exactly how he had subsidized his solo operations for so long, and there had been intermittent mentions in news stories of funding from Arab, including Libyan, interests. In addition, there were widespread rumors of womanizing. Almost inevitably, these questions, of whatever varying substance and pertinence, would waylay Jackson again should he appear to be even approaching any possibility of the Presidential or the Vice-Presidential nomination—or should he simply, to some in the Party, become a no longer tolerable irritant and inconvenience. Though Jackson addressed these awkwardly lingering items somewhat more directly over the following months, at first he merely responded, a touch wistfully, "Yeah, but isn't all that stuff behind us now?" Another time, he offered the redoubtable optimism "If jail cells couldn't, then people being unkind to you can't cut your breath. One of the worst things that can happen to your opponents, they knock you down and you keep gettin' right back up. *Good godamighty*, what a strength!"

But, of all the liabilities still facing Jackson, perhaps the one that would be most difficult to dispel was his immaculate innocence of any governmental experience. It had become probably the most telling misgiving raised by his critics. Some suggested, in fact, that about the only identifiably notable thing he had actually achieved so far had been his campaign for the Presidency. Jackson's rejoinder when I first mentioned this concern was to maintain that he had, in effect, largely gained the qualifications for the office in the course of running for it. "The variety and complexity of issues you have to master, and under maximum pressure—it's the most intensive course in political science available. You couldn't learn any other way what I've learned in the past five, six years. There is no laboratory like this one."

Later, apparently sensing that this argument did not quite answer the question, he declared, "Well, *look* at my background, if you want to. Working with Dr. King in Chicago in 1966. Base of operations in Chicago for twenty-some years, and from that base I've proved I know how to do certain things. I've registered more voters, negotiated with more corporations—economic boycotts, economic negotiations. Called in to negotiate ends to teachers' strikes, firemen's strikes. Always moving—moving, moving. Helped organize a successful national campaign for chairman of the Democratic Party"—a reference to Ron Brown's 1989 campaign. "Negotiated the release of Robert Goodman with the Syrian government"—a reference to the black Navy airman who had been downed by Syrian fire during a surveillance flight in 1983. "So the question about can he get things done and manage a staff, and all that, no senator or governor or congressman *I* know of has a scope that large. Do they? Can you name one?

"Foreign policy," he elaborated at another point early in 1989. "I speak now with heads of state in Africa, Latin America, all over the world. Mitterrand, Castro, Arafat, Assad, Thatcher. And when I have these discussions the question that foreign-policy circles never ask about me anymore is 'By what authority?' They don't argue with my being conversant with the issues now. They may have some debate with my ideas, but truth is, so far, most of my ideas have been prevailing. On Central America, talking to the Palestinians, sanctions against South Africa—every position we were attacked on in the past has now become center policy. Who's made the adjustment? I look at America coming full circle on these questions, now talking to the P.L.O. and urging Israel to. What was extreme is now mainstream. Can't be radical advocating those things anymore. Getting to where, way history is moving, you have to work harder and harder to stay radical for long, have to really sweat away at it, you know? There's a new center now, and we're in the *heart* of that center." He intoned, "It is a strange and rewarding gratification to see policies that we were labelled radical for preaching now become the moral center of national politics and U.S. policy. Seldom does a person live to see that happen. And the press now, not many of them writing any columns anymore about 'He's stupid, he ain't got no head on him.' None of that now. They can't say, 'He does not understand policy.' They say now, in fact, I know more about Third World policy, for instance, than the Secretary of State does. Than even Bush does. Mean, they have just come to *assume* that. So those would seem to me credentials—anybody else out there can match 'em, I can't think of who right off."

But in the end, to counter the question of his never having served in any governmental office, Jackson mainly resorted to his own elemental calculus of political reality: "The basis of *my* strength and credibility is not any office or position but my relationship with the people. Somebody'll say, 'You know, I got *x* number of constituents in my district, that's why I got authority.' But all you are is elected to an office from that district, that's all. Some people been elected like thirty-four times, but they still don't have a following. Thirty-year senator, chairman of all these committees, and he still doesn't have a following to show for it. Somebody elected president of an organization by four hundred, four thousand, however more people, he's occupying that *office*, he's head of that organization, he holds that seat, but he's not head of all those people. Follow what I'm saying? From alderman up to governor to senator, they have territory on *paper* as their domain, they all laying claim to that: 'It's my *domain*.' But at some point the real mandate and power and initiatives have to come from a relationship with people, not with official structures. And the masses of the people, who are unstructured and so not depending on people and processes they don't see or know, they have responded to what they saw in me. I'd hear, 'Jesse, you can't run for President, you hadn't had a position or office to get enough votes.' But the people responded anyway. Others guys had the positions, but they didn't have the following.



"Elected officials, most of 'em, get locked into an arrangement that distracts them from serving the real interests of the nation," he declared. "In terms of the relationship between political office and the realities of any given society, the views actually get *narrower* as you go toward the top. The guys at the top, they got big positions but small agendas. What you find up there as the strategic overview is really just a broad collection of individual myopias. Most of their lives are invested in getting reëlected, campaigning in their districts, their caucuses, trying to get on some committee with limited responsibility. Cross-fertilizing, increasing their own stature. That's the system they locked into, and unless they play by its limited rules they will be denied promotion. And while they accept that trade-off the people are moving on down the street."

This syndrome, Jackson averred, claims black politicians no less quickly than whites. "Often, our leaders have emerged from the movement, from the struggle, from the bush, and got elected to some governmental office. And they wind up before long 'bout as conservative and cautious as what they replaced. While they still mouthin' righteous principles, their real preoccupation is reëlection or heading some committee or election to a higher office. The system's got 'em. Happens all the time. They trade off their street power, their people power, for security in the tokens and technicalities of importance. Can say, 'I'm chairman or senator or secretary of whatever, supported by friends, everybody's polite to me. I run around, and everyplace I go somebody meets me at the airport, and every time I speak somebody gives me a plaque.' Well, see just how *fast* all that airport-reception and plaque-giving business stops when you out of office."

In all this, Jackson seemed to be suggesting that his own qualifications had somehow passed beyond the ordinary, prosaic expectations applied to candidates. But the skepticism about his innocence of governmental experience continued to vex him. During his trip through Africa shortly after the election, a visit to the compound of a Yoruba king in the Nigerian interior moved him, on the way back to Lagos, to another of his mystic ruminations, which he managed to apply to the question of his own worthiness as a Presidential candidate. "You know, it's like Tillich said, 'God is the ground of my being.' I asked the king back there where his power and authority

"The city is lost
to music."
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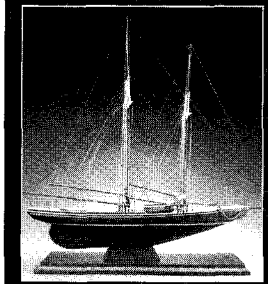

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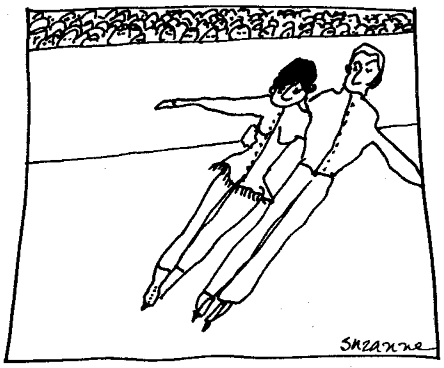
came from. He said it all came to him *from the earth, from the ground of his* people up to him. The people are the ground of his being. A leader with that kind of authority is a little different from some general or government official in charge of distributing the flour and grits. He has *another* authority, because he moves people. It’s more than just political or official—it’s love-and-justice power. The people are the ground of his power. That’s *another* kind of power. Sometimes it’s a little hard for other folks to quite figure that out. Party officials, government figures, the pundits, they have sort of a hard time gettin’ that.”

“Jesse Jackson isn’t going to get to be in this system what he might think he wants to be,” David Halberstam has commented. “But he could be something much more important. He’s become the media black man in the world-media age.” Jackson’s journeys to Africa and the Soviet Union, in fact, turned into a kind of international expansion of the gospel-populist messages of his American campaigns. The expeditions occasioned no little irritation to some United States Embassy officials along the way. “Just what are we supposed to do with this guy?” one complained as he stood watching from the edges of a Jackson press conference in Lagos. “Exactly who is he representing? What’s he supposed to be?” But at dinner with a pair of United States envoys in Zimbabwe on a January evening in 1989—many months before the legal disassembling of apartheid in South Africa, the fall of the Berlin Wall, the dissolution of the Soviet empire—Jackson eagerly expounded, “If anybody knows, you guys should know that the world community is such, our foreign policy is going to jeopardize the strength of our country in a significant way if we do not have leadership equal to the task of a liberal new world order. Which is emerging. Gonna be emerging everywhere you turn around over the next few years. Can *not* be held back.”

During his visit to the Soviet Union in February of 1989, in discussions with Soviet authorities and democratic militants alike, Jackson took to expatiating on the struggle of *perestroika*, in which they were all caught up, by casting it as a kind of extension of the civil-rights movement in the American South during the sixties. Jackson has a way of presenting previously unremarked connective patterns to the general perspective of historical situations—new moral synapses, as it were. Indeed, in his view, the popular process that eventually climaxed in the failure of the putsch last August had actually begun some thirty years earlier in Alabama and Mississippi, in the rousing mass meetings in black churches and the courthouse-square confrontations with club-wielding police. Those were the initial manifestations, Jackson suggests, of a sporadic and uneven but amplifying historical dynamic called by the movement “people power,” continuing into the demonstrations against the Vietnam War, the confrontations in Prague in the spring of 1968, protests in South Africa, arcing over the decades to the Solidarity movement in Poland, the popular overthrow of Marcos in the Philippines, then to Tiananmen Square, then to Eastern Europe—where, in the squares of its capitals, demonstrators were heard singing “We Shall Overcome.” Jackson says, “In a certain sense, it’s all been a projection of the soul force of the movement struggle back in the sixties.”

Accordingly, in a 1989 session with Soviet officials in Armenia, when the republic’s reformist Communist Party chairman complained, “*Glasnost* and *perestroika* is making the life of political and Party organization in the Soviet Union much more difficult,” Jackson responded, “That’s good. Way it’s ’spose to be. Way Jesus described it was the difficulty of putting new wine in old wineskins. The will to *glasnost* and *perestroika* is equal to the will to live, to breathe. This process of democratization you’re engaging in is very deep in nature. That’s because it honors the natural law of self-determination.” He went on, “Democratization is going to release a new energy through this society. Gonna release energies people never even really realized they had. You’ve set something loose, Mr. Chairman, can’t be controlled or revoked, you know. A state simply cannot contain the natural urges of its people to move into a freer arrangement. But it’ll be challenging! Be exciting!” He then added, “Government of the people, by the people, for the people, is a retirement plan for stagnant leaders. Yeah! Leaders got to keep up with the course of this process—or they have a Siberia in their future. Right?”



This brought a scatter of uncertain coughs of laughter. “We are not afraid of criticism,” the chairman said.

“Well, that’s hopeful to hear,” Jackson answered. “Because a lot of creative energy comes out of that criticizing business. In the long run, it makes leaders better, because it makes them broader. Why that’s crucial is because what you guys are facing now is, from my own experience, only a little thing compared to what’ll be coming down the road, as this process you’ve started really opens on up.”

In the same way, Jackson exhorted Soviet democratic militants who were often ranged against those authorities. To three young activists, introduced to him as “the S.N.C.C. of the Soviet Union,” Jackson said, “There’re so many parallels with our struggle for our own form of *perestroika*.” He advised them, “Dr. King and others of us went to jail. We said, ‘If equal protection under the law is real, if having the right to vote is supposed to be real for everybody, let’s *test* it. We all equal? Well, then, let’s run for mayor and Congress—let’s even run for President.’ So if you have five thousand people marchin’ down the streets of, say, Leningrad, demanding a certain adjustment, if they are then arrested and beaten, then you’ve proven limits, but if they’re not, then you’ve expanded the realities. I mean, have to *define* it, then *test* it. Get what I’m sayin’?”

He cautioned them to resist any bitterness over disappointments. “Point you make, that people’ll meet and protest, and still nothing happens—that’s always gonna be true no matter what the social order. Parallel at home is, we’re a fairly open society, but I’ve seen countless numbers of farmers, union folk, unemployed and homeless, all marching in big protests, who either get completely ignored or get only meagre victories. So you can conceivably demonstrate in great numbers and not change much at first. But in time, *in time*, the movement of that number of people *will* begin to make something happen.

"Now, don't give up when the counterforce comes. Which it will, sooner or later. In this new arrangement here, those in power are still gonna try to stack the deck against you to assure their own survival. But that's natural, that would happen anywhere—it's just built into the system everywhere. But so often the great-idea people, like you guys, have a tendency to give up when the counterforce comes. And there's no doubt the counterforce *is* going to come. So when that happens, what you guys here in Moscow and Leningrad, and all those provincial towns you talked about, what y'all got to do is *hold on*. Like the movement song, keep your eyes on the prize—hold on! 'Cause y'all are, after all, representing something in nature ultimately *stronger* than that counterforce. That's what y'all must never forget as this thing plays itself on out. That's what 'Keep hope alive' really means."

BUT for all Jackson's insisting after the campaign and after his receptions abroad that he had arrived at last, he privately still seemed unreassured. Despite all that had remarkably happened to him—despite the celebrity he now enjoyed, despite the deference now accorded him by other political eminences, despite his own sense of having finally acquired an impressive national validity—it seemed he still did not feel himself to really belong.

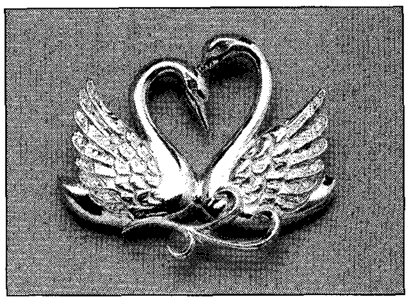
Over the course of his trips abroad, Jackson reflected on the sense of displacement that has endured as a legacy of his people's abduction from Africa into captive servitude in America. "Racism is still the *x* factor in American society, in ways that aren't even consciously hostile," he said. "Still holding us in bondage, but it's elusive, because it's so embedded in the soul of our culture—almost like, you know, born and bred into iniquity. Even *we* are kind of resistant to acknowledging it, because it's such a heavy thing. All these old images, cursed descendants of Ham, dirty people, naïve, childlike. Sociologically, couldn't adjust. Color we had, must be different. Talk different. All of us supposed to have soul, have rhythm—I've seen blacks in wheelchairs trying to roll with it, didn't even have any legs, but you black, *you got to dance*. We've grown up surrounded by these depersonalizing images, an I-it relationship rather than I-Thou. Low expectations. When I was at the hospital waiting for our last baby to be born, there was a white guy there, too, walking around in circles. Had a cigarette—*I* had a cigarette, and I don't even smoke. Both of us with our wives in there. Time came, we put on these little backless robes, and we went down that hall together holding hands. They brought 'em out—white baby, black baby. And I thought, That white baby has not come out with a chemistry book in its hand. And my baby did not come out with track shoes on. Whatever's happened to them since—if his baby turned out to be a chemistry professor and mine turned out to be only a high-school runner—it would not be the way God sent 'em here. It's the mythology of the society. African-Americans supposed to play ball. Universities take 'em in when they can't read and write, drop academic standards, and say, 'It's all right, got to make allowances for *these*.' "

Jackson went on, "In so many ways, *so many ways*, have we been bred into insecurity. Du Bois, you know, talked about the burden of double consciousness of being black in America. You belong and yet you don't. You free but yet you're not. It's your place, but yet you kept separated from it. You there but yet you ain't. Though it's more difficult trying to make it under that double role and double burden, once you survive it you have double muscles. But it's like we have almost to be superior just to be equal."

Some time later, during a long ride one night through the backcountry of Armenia, the man who got seven million votes fell to reflecting on his bleak childhood. "There's a Scripture that talks about a ship that wrecked and its stern broke," Jackson said. "And the Bible says that they made it on broken pieces to dry land. Sometimes it seems it's really you against the world. And you have to make it on whatever broken pieces you got."

—MARSHALL FRADY

(*This is the first part of a three-part article.*)



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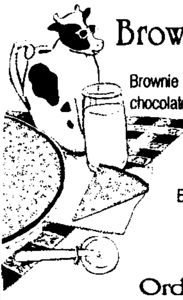

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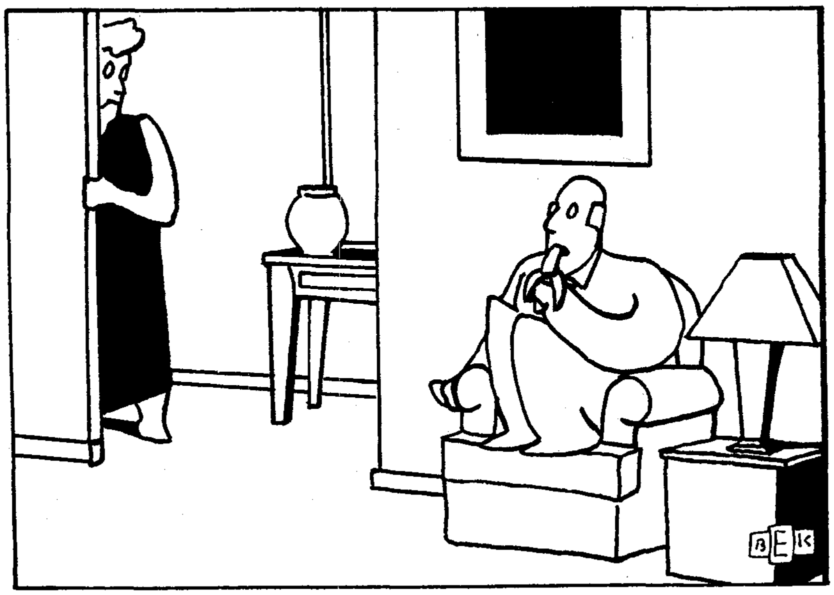
THE THEATRE

Revisit

THE richest woman on earth, or nearly, returns to a town, presumably in Switzerland, to seek and destroy the man who loved her and deserted her thirty-eight years before. She is Clara Zachanassian and he is Anton Schill, of Friedrich Dürrenmatt's "The Visit," which was revived last week at the Roundabout, with Jane Alexander and Harris Yulin in the leading roles. When the action begins, many of the town's leading citizens are awaiting Clara's arrival by train, in the hope that she will rescue them from the grinding poverty in which they live. This she does by agreeing to give a billion marks—half to the town and the other half to be split among its citizens, on condition that they murder Schill. The play, a bit-by-bit study in corruption, has been directed (within an inch of its life) by Edwin Sherin; there are thirty-one characters, who are apportioned among eleven actors (not counting the principals), and Mr. Sherin has solved the inevitable doubling and tripling by disguising the supporting actors in off-and-on grotesque masks, thereby snuffing all humanity out of them. Mr. Dürrenmatt takes a bleak enough view of the human race without making it necessary to consign its members to the funny papers.

"Bleak" is the operative word here. Nevertheless—an enormous nevertheless—Miss Alexander and Mr. Yulin are sturdy, acceptable replacements for the Lunts of the 1958 production. My memory of that production, the American première, is sketchy (lucky you), but it seemed to me then very much Alfred Lunt's play, dominated by the cringing, terrified, retching Schill. Lynn Fontanne (again, in my memory) was a beautiful, looming, vindictive presence. Now I see that Madame (in the capable hands of Miss Alexander) is by all odds the star. She moves from train to sedan chair, carried by two American gangsters (she is lame, having lost a leg in some accident), and is accompanied by a dangerous black panther and by her fiancé, a foolish Brazilian millionaire whose only interest is fishing. (He comes in from time to time with his catch of the day.) There is also on hand a pair of little blind eunuchs, whose function is a mystery. Slowly, Clara's story is told: after being left pregnant, she had a child, who died, and she then became a whore; the progress from whoredom to riches is untold, but nothing can quench her bitterness or allay her venom. She is grotesque but beautiful, and beautifully clothed. Schill is an easygoing shopkeeper, more and more puzzled by the amount of merchandise his customers are buying on credit. At the end, he is quiet, almost numb with fear, as he waits for the inevitable. An approach, by the way, as valid as Lunt's, though perhaps not as memorable. For the most part, the show is a matter of small scenes and a few sight gags—everyone in identical new shoes, for example.



HERB GOT IN TOUCH WITH HIS INNER MONKEY.

Among the notable supporting actors are Tom Tammi, as a teacher with a wide streak of decency; Doug Stender, as the mayor; Kelly Walters, as the stationmaster; and Ellen Lancaster, increasingly detached, as Schill's wife. Admirable setting and costumes by Thomas Lynch and Frank Krenz; admirable lighting by Roger Morgan. "The Visit" was adapted and, presumably, translated by Maurice Valency, as what was not in the nineteen-fifties? —EDITH OLIVER

Reverse Angle

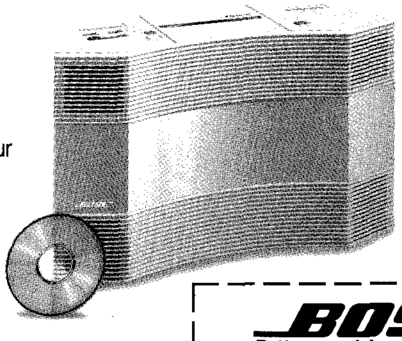
THERE'S a wonderful little play on at the Manhattan Theatre Club. Written by Donald Margulies (he also wrote "Found a Peanut" and "The Loman Family Picnic"), it's called "Sight Unseen," and that's pretty much how you should take it. The play (it's running at the company's Stage II space, so you have to get there early, because the policy is "general seating") concerns Jonathan Waxman (Dennis Boutsikaris), an Eric Fischl-type painter who decides, while in London for an important opening, to drive out to the farmhouse where an old girlfriend whom he once treated badly now lives with her archeologist husband (Jon De Vries). The girlfriend (Deborah Hedwall), who shares her husband's profession though not his bed, is now fifteen years older and more bitter, and that's probably all you should know about "Sight Unseen," except that it's one of those plays which go backward in time. It's not sloppy, like "Plenty," the David Hare play that began in 1962, went back to the Second World War, and then gave you an incident from the heroine's life every few years on up to the sixties again, before going back not quite to where we started; but neither is it, like Pinter's "Betrayal" or Kaufman and Hart's "Merrily We Roll Along," a straight reverse progression. Instead, there's an elegant parallelism between the time lines. Each of the two acts begins with a scene at the farmhouse and moves to a scene four days later at a gallery in London, where Jonathan is being interviewed by an aggressive young German woman (Laura Linney)—one of those high-powered

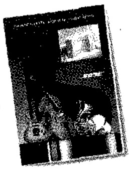
European media academics—whose cordiality is matched only by her desire to unmask him as a charlatan. The second half of each act takes us back to the farmhouse and then, farther back, to a period some fifteen years before. It sounds complicated, but you're left with a marvellous, symmetry-induced feeling of serenity.

I'm sure there are clever things to note about the play—the way the plot hinges on a painting that we never see (though we constantly see people looking at it), or the use Margulies makes of the notion of archeology (digging up the past)—but as I watched it I remember thinking mostly about how good Michael Bloom's direction was, and about how the play's ability to affect us derives from disclosures of where things started and where they went. I remember realizing how essential it is to see "Sight Unseen" *performed*, because if Mr. Boutsikaris were not right there in front of you, managing to be both sympathetic and ingeniously untouched by everything anyone says to him, you'd feel sorry for Jonathan. Similarly, you need Miss Hedwall's performance to show what the girlfriend was like fifteen years earlier, and the performances of Mr. De Vries and Miss Linney to show how swiftly the husband and the journalist can oscillate between rage and passivity, say, or candor and spite. And, because of the way the flip side of James Youmans' turntable set would silently change into something else while we were watching a scene, I remember thinking, How do they *do* that?

The meticulous casting and tight direction of this production reminded me—no doubt because so much of "Sight Unseen" takes place in England—of all that staid Brit theatre which the M.T.C. stages with such accuracy and devotion. Like many people, I suspect, I've been rolling my eyes heavenward every time I hear about one of its upcoming main-stage productions of Ayckbourn or Simon Gray or imitation Simon Gray. I've come to regard such programming as the price the company has to pay for success—for having a large and well-established pool of longtime subscribers. But if you think of such Anglophile fare as practice for mounting a "Sight Unseen" in the smaller, developmental space, then you have to say it's worth it.

—MIMI KRAMER





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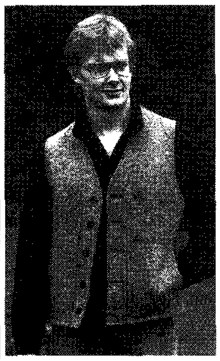

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MUSICAL EVENTS

The Means of Expression

AMONG the most attractive and coherent divisions of Lincoln Center's ambitious Mozart *intégrale* is the set of seventeen concerts devoted to the Masses. The Great C-minor Mass, of 1782-83, is often performed, and it figures four times on the Lincoln Center schedule. The sixteen earlier Masses, composed before Mozart left Salzburg, in 1781, are abundantly represented on record—the catalogues show seven different performances of the earliest of them, the "Waisenhausmesse," and twenty of the "Coronation" Mass—but they are among the works least familiar to the ordinary concertgoer. Several of them are *missae breves;* in a famous letter Mozart told Padre Martini that in Salzburg "a Mass with the whole of the Kyrie, the Gloria, the Credo, the Epistle Sonata, the Offertory or Motet, the Sanctus, and the Agnus Dei must not last longer than three-quarters of an hour." For two reasons, I think, the merits of the Salzburg Masses are underrated. Our knowledge of young Mozart's chafing in the Archbishop's service and his general impatience with Salzburg musical life tempts us to regard the Masses as commissions reluctantly undertaken and therefore unlikely to be inspired. (After moving to Vienna, Mozart abandoned the genre, except for that Great C-minor Mass, which he planned for a Salzburg *rentrée* but never completed.) And in concert performances and on disk we hear the Masses as they were never intended to be heard, one movement hard upon another, undivided by plainchant, by prayers, by readings of the Gospel and the Epistle and the little Epistle Sonata played between them, by Offertory and motet. A third reason may be the uncertainty of the canon: Masses not long ago attributed to Mozart have been ascribed to other men, and even now the chronology of the Masses deemed authentic remains unsettled.

At Lincoln Center, the Masses are not simply being ticked off one after another. Each is being presented as a distinct, composite jewel in its special setting. Seventeen choruses and orchestras from conservatories and universities across the country and in Canada have been invited to take part, each with its carefully prepared offering. In an ideal world, Lincoln Center would long since have taken into its ambit one or more of the nearby churches, in which sacred music could be heard as potently as possible. Secular Tully Hall, in which the Masses are being performed, has little resonance. And it has no altar, so one does not expect priests and a Consecration. But for these Mass concerts a special kind of "secular service," or musical celebration, has been devised. Instead of prayers and Consecration, a musical miracle—the movements of an early Mozart symphony appropriate in key and in date—provides the frame. An Epistle Sonata—Mozart wrote seventeen of them—divides the Gloria from the Credo, and appropriate motets form the Offertory and the Communion.

The eighth concert in the series, last month, afforded as close to bliss as one gets in this world: exquisitely exact music lovingly and accurately performed. The Mass was K. 194 (of 1774), in D; the framing symphony was K. 202, in the same key and written in the same year; the Epistle Sonata was K. 245, in D; the motets were "Venite populi," K. 260, in D, as Offertory, and "Misericordias Domini," K. 222, in D minor, as Communion. "Misericordias Domini" is the masterpiece of science and eloquence that Mozart sent proudly to Padre Martini, inviting his frank criticism. (Martini found in it "all that modern music requires: good harmony, rich modulation, moderate pace in the violins, natural modulation from passage to passage, and good part-writing.") "Venite populi" is the great motet for two choirs—used now antiphonally, now in eight-part counterpoint—that once excited Brahms' admiration. The performers were the Oberlin College Choir and the Oberlin Mozart Orchestra. Daniel Moe, that dean of chorus conductors, conducted the choral movements, and Bridget-Michaele Reischl the instrumental. The organ, for reasons unexplained, stayed silent during the choral pieces; neither the choristers nor the soloists, a well-tuned quartet of Oberlin graduates, had mastered a fluent trill. All else was delight, and Miss Reischl is a discovery; she led poised, lively, unfussy performances. For good measure, the A-major Symphony K. 201 ended the program, after an intermission; it was done with elegance and charm.

Several Mass concerts remain. On February 1st, forces from the University of Colorado present a C-major evening: the "Piccolomini" Mass, K. 258, the Symphony K. 200, a C-major Epistle Sonata, and the extended motet, with solo soprano, "Regina Coeli."

Victoria Roberts

"I wasn't anybody in a previous lifetime, either."

AN essay by Larry Rothe in the November-December program book of the San Francisco Symphony discusses three orchestra pieces that are "about" something: John Adams' "El Dorado," which "has as its subject the greed of the eighties"; Charles Ives' Fourth Symphony, which "is a quest for nothing less than the meaning of life"; and John Corigliano's First Symphony, which "is a tribute to the countless men and women who have died of AIDS." The Adams piece—a San Francisco commission—has not yet reached New York, but the Corigliano symphony was played here last month by the Philharmonic. A recording of it (on Erato), made by Daniel Barenboim and the Chicago Symphony, which commissioned the work and gave the first performances, nearly two years ago, has for months held a place in *Billboard's* classical top ten. Leonard Slatkin, who conducted the New York première, says it "may be the most important symphonic statement that we've seen in twenty years." It won last year's Grawemeyer Award—music's Nobel Prize.

In a program note Corigliano writes:

> A few years ago, I was extremely moved when I first saw "The Quilt," an ambitious interweaving of several thousand fabric panels, each memorializing a person who had died of AIDS, and, more importantly, each designed and constructed by his or her loved ones. This made me want to memorialize in music those I have lost, and reflect on those I am losing. I decided to relate the three movements of the Symphony to three lifelong musician-friends. In the third movement, still other friends are recalled in a quilt-like interweaving of motivic melodies.

The first movement, entitled "Apologue: Of Rage and Remembrance," is marked "ferocious." It uses the musical gestures of anger, anguish, and tension: long-sustained unisons that grow louder and louder, shrill woodwind screams (marked "hysterical"), brass blurtings, the bang of drums. Things subside to a single violin line (*desolato*), and in the distance a pianist plays strains of the Albéniz-Godowsky Tango, *dolcissimo ed armonioso, molto espressivo*. The movement, Corigliano says, "reflects my distress over Sheldon Shkolnik, a concert-pianist friend who had been diagnosed as having AIDS"; he died a week after the first performance of the symphony. After a while, the music gets loud again—four pages of hammered chords are marked "everything as loud as possible"; then it becomes soft again, and the distant piano is heard once more. The second movement, Tarantella, was written in memory of a friend "whose wit and intelligence were legendary in the music

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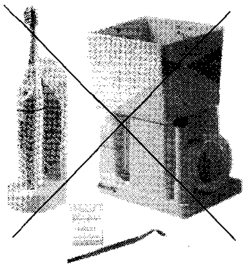

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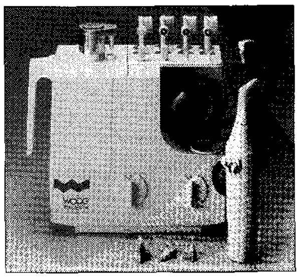

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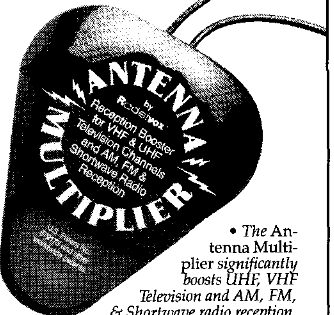
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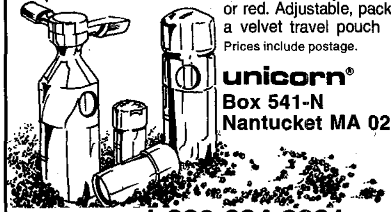

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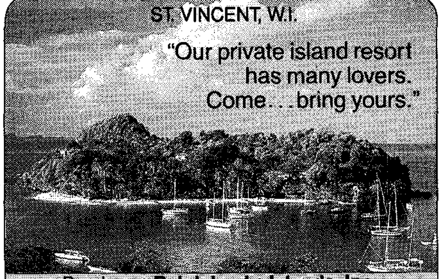

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field" but who "became insane as a result of AIDS dementia." A perky, trivial tarantella theme is submitted to increasingly horrible distortions; there is an episode of diatonic pastoral dream over soft, confused string chords. "The ending can only be described as a brutal scream."

The finale, "Chaconne: Giulio's Song," is punctuated by a solo cello melody that starts with a four-note whole-tone ascent. (This also starts "Es ist genug," the chorale quoted in Berg's Violin Concerto: "It is enough! Lord, when it pleases Thee, Relieve me of my yoke!") Corigliano found his motto while listening to a 1962 tape recording of himself and a cello-playing friend improvising. Over the chords of a slow chaconne, other memorial themes appear, each identified in the score by a name; among those remembered are the cellist Fortunato Arico, who was Giulio's teacher (a second solo cello), the pianist Paul Jacobs, who was the Philharmonic pianist (an English-horn theme), and Robert Jacobson, who was the editor of *Opera News* (an oboe theme). William M. Hoffman, the librettist of Corigliano's "Ghosts of Versailles," wrote memorial sentences for each; Corigliano set them to music and then removed the text. The music builds to a battering funeral march, loud with the clang and clash of bells. In an Epilogue, earlier themes are heard through a series of soft "waves" from the brasses, which ring the platform.

Eighteen sections of the AIDS Memorial Quilt hung in the Fisher Hall lobby, and the audience was invited to inscribe "the names of any people who have touched your life who have died of AIDS" on a new panel destined to become part of it. Both the composition and the circumstances of its performance carried a high emotional charge. It seems unfeeling to find that the music itself is not particularly good, but somewhat obvious, conventional, posterlike. In the company of such finely wrought—yet equally personal—elegies as Berg's Violin Concerto, Tippett's "A Child of Our Time," Sessions' requiem "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd," and Britten's "War Requiem," the symphony seems brash, almost unworthy. Berlioz, engaged on "The Trojans," wrote to Princess Sayn-Wittgenstein about Wagner's "crime" of reducing music to "expressive accents." When music "makes its conquests it must fight in person, not through its lieutenants." He continued:

> To find the means of being expressive, and truthful, without ceasing to be a musician: rather, to endow music with new means of action—that is the problem. Another hurdle in my path is that the feelings to be expressed move me too much. That is bad. One must try to do coolly the things that are most fiery.

Corigliano has written hotly—yet who can blame him? Poster art—angry, aggressive banging and soupy, sentimental nostalgia—is today's favored symphonic mode.

John Adams says of the first movement of his "El Dorado"—angry, violent music—"I'm sure it was my own response to the Gulf War." Aaron Jay Kernis's Second Symphony, which had its première at an Absolut Vodka concert last month, in Fisher Hall, addresses the Gulf War and more. The composer calls it "something of an outcry against the current political, moral, and ethical crises in America" and adds, "The endless violence of the Gulf War, the subtle and unsubtle encroachment upon women's and minority rights, the hovering threat of censorship of artists along with the economic, social, and medical disasters that plague us daily, in some way have contributed to the emotional climate of this work." The movements are entitled "Alarm," "Air/Ground," and "Barricade," and "a recurring image that came to me during the writing of the third movement was that of the building full of innocent Iraqi civilians under siege which was mistakenly bombed and obliterated nearly a year ago." The first movement begins softly, but with the marking "aggressively," and it builds swiftly to wave upon wave of noisy climax, underpinned by ostinato figuration. In the second movement, there are "grounded" harmonies with simple melodies wandering above them, and some violent outbursts. The finale (*appassionato, intenso*) takes up themes from the earlier movements and ends with the loudest noise I have heard in a concert hall: four tam-tams being whacked *ffffff* and "held at maximum volume" for five seconds.

Kernis's symphony was one of three works commissioned by Absolut for this concert. The evening began with John David Earnest's "Sun Songs and Nocturnes," an unremarkable cycle for male-voice chorus and orchestra.

Joseph Turrin's Flute Concerto was a Prokofiev-recalling anachronism. The program ended with the New York première of David Diamond's "This Sacred Ground," which was first heard, in Buffalo, some twenty-eight years ago. It is a setting of the Gettysburg Address, for chorus, baritone soloist, and orchestra. The opening is impressive: simple, direct, even noble in its rhetoric. But the final, reiterated motif, "*of* the people, *by* the people, *for* the people," seems a little too easily found. Hugh Wolff conducted the New Jersey Symphony.

MANY composers have written a "Japanese" piece: a delicate flower arrangement of spare, poetic sounds precisely placed. Claude Baker's—which had its New York première at another Philharmonic concert last month, also conducted by Leonard Slatkin—is "Shadows: Four Dirge-Nocturnes for Orchestra." Four haiku—two from the seventeenth century, two from the nineteenth—are its inspiration. The first is:

> Cool the moonlight:
> shadow of a tombstone,
> shadow of a pine.

But each movement also has a musical ancestor: the finale of Mahler's "Song of the Earth," the Dirge of Britten's Serenade, Stravinsky's "In Memoriam Dylan Thomas," and the last song of Mahler's "Kindertotenlieder." There are quotations and near-quotations. Guiros are scratched gently, a marimba patters, little bells ting, pedal-timpani notes rise and fall, there are sudden wind exclamations. It is all daintily and decently made—as agreeable, and unmemorable, as dozens of similar compositions.

HANDEL'S "Radamisto" (1720), which received its first American staging at Mannes College last month, was the composer's first work for the Royal Academy of Music—that grand scheme to establish in London a permanent international opera company as splendid as any in Europe. Handel took care with its composition; the source libretto was adapted for him and made more directly dramatic. Three of the international stars—the soprano Maddalena Salvai, the alto Senesino, and the bass Giuseppe Boschi—had not yet arrived. Handel composed the opera with his prima donna, Margherita

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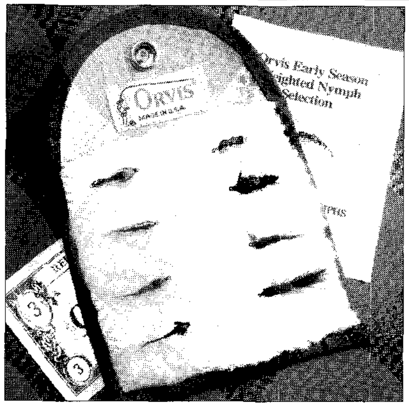

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Durastanti, in the title role; an English contralto as Zenobia, Radamistus' wife; an English soprano as Polixena, Radamistus' sister; and a Scottish tenor, Alexander Gordon, as Tiridates, who is married to Polixena but lusts after Zenobia and wages war to win her. (Gordon, a man of parts—later a painter, antiquary, Egyptologist, and papal biographer—ended up as a wealthy South Carolina landowner.) "Radamisto" opened in April, 1720; in December, when the other Italians had arrived, Handel revived it, recast and fairly extensively recomposed (with Senesino in the title role, Durastanti now as Zenobia, Salvai as Polixena, and Boschi as Tiridates). "Radamisto" is one of the few Handel operas whose second version is not patently inferior to the first. In April, there was a fifth principal, Phraärtes; the role, originally that of Tiridates' captain and confidant, had acquired importance because its singer, the soprano Benedetto Baldassari, complained (so a letter to *The Theatre* tells us) "that he had never acted any thing, in any other Opera, below the Character of a Sovereign; or, at least, a Prince of the Blood; and that now he was appointed to be a Captain of the Guard, and a Pimp." The aggrieved castrato "found Friends" and was promoted to princedom. A sixth character, Tigranes (another soprano), is important: for by his political skill and decency he effects the happy ending.

"Radamisto" contains much wonderful music; one aria, the hero's "Ombra cara," Winton Dean describes as "beyond question one of the greatest arias composed by Handel or anyone else in the eighteenth century." Any telling of the plot makes it sound impossibly intricate, but—as so often with Handel—once onstage it proves easy to follow. Mr. Dean calls "Radamisto" the first Handel opera whose libretto permits a sustained response from the composer, so that he "outsoars the convention and presents us across the centuries with a great work of art" in which "the central conflicts ring true, the different strands are skillfully woven together, and the motives of the characters . . . are reasonably clear and consistent, so that the music can develop a high emotional pressure." At earlier performances of "Radamisto"—London productions, and a 1980 concert version in Carnegie—I never quite felt that; last month the opera did live up to its reputation. Those earlier performances were heavily cut; at the near-complete Mannes performance, the development and design of the drama made their effect. Will Crutchfield, who directed, had inspired a young cast with his vision of an opera that is more than one good aria after another—a work in which (as he put it in a program note) "two stories unfold: the journey through crisis to self-knowledge and mutual trust of a noble couple (Radamistus and Zenobia), and the struggle to replace an order based on military force and ambition with one that respects diplomacy, coöperation, and stability." April, 1720, provided the basic text, with some annexation from the December score and, for the mezzo hero, some transpositions to her most effective keys, midway between those of the soprano Durastanti and the alto Senesino.

A large-type libretto with parallel English translation was supplied, and the houselights stayed on. The staging was simple: costumes in basic black, with character trimmings (sashes, swords); a platform bare except for the occasional seats required by the plot. Handel needs no more to be brought to life. A 1720 "Radamisto" prompt book survives, and its indications prompted the Mannes production (with simplification, in that the twenty-six supers it specifies were reduced to six). Natalie Arduino, the Radamistus, and Désirée Halac-Lezama, the Zenobia, were affecting performers, who could hold the audience rapt on their delivery of the music. Olga Makarina, the Polixena, delivered recitative with lively vocal inflections but dull eyes and hands; she brought the house down with her fleet, bright voicing of the parade aria "Sposo ingrato." Indira Mahajan was an alert Tigranes. Sara Taggart, the Phraärtes, was candid and charming but rhythmically wayward. David Hamilton—a former City Opera baritone, now turned tenor—shouted Tiridates' music. There was some doubtful intonation from the strings of the Mannes Opera Orchestra (tropical heat in the hall cannot have helped), but the first violin, Wen Qian, sparkled in "Sposo ingrato," and the solos of the first oboe, Mikhail Mamedov, were tellingly shaped.

—ANDREW PORTER

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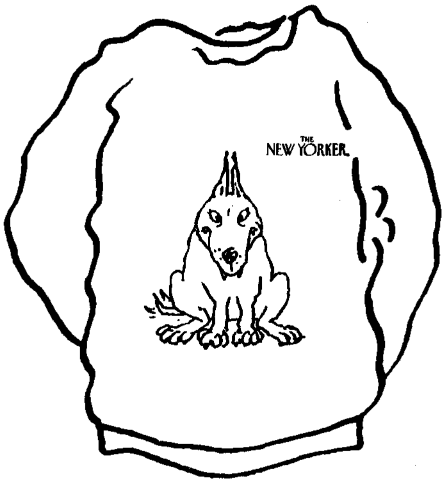

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IN FASHION

Sackcloth and Ashes

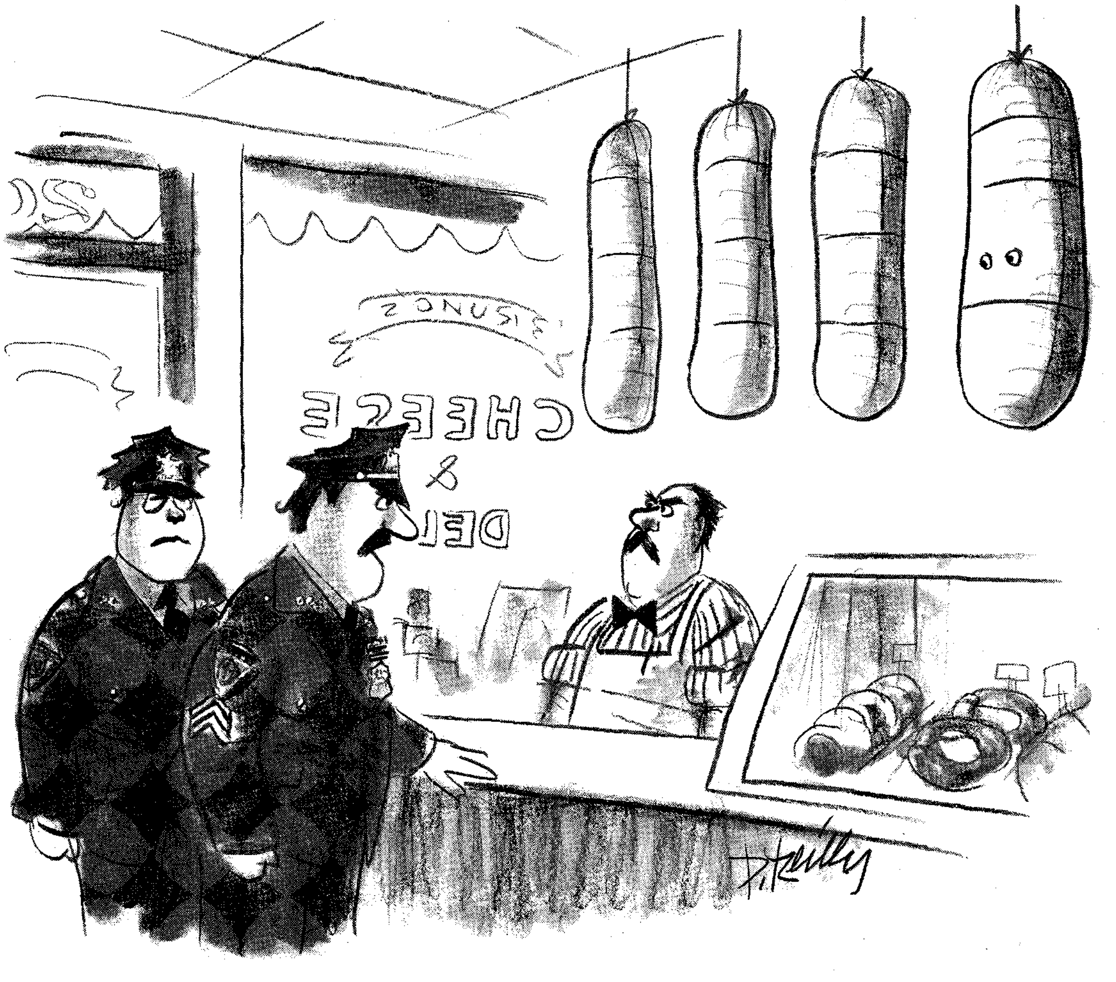
IN Charles Ludlam's "Caprice"—a play about a highly evolved hermit who, in return for an act of altruism, is reincarnated as Claude Caprice, the leading fashion designer of his day—a character by the name of Zuni, identified as "a slave of fashion," undergoes a change of heart and renounces all that she has so relentlessly pursued. "Good-bye to ladies who lunch and *Women's Wear Daily*," she cries. "Farewell Norell, *adiós* Balenciaga. *Adieu* Dior. Schiaparelli and Chanel, farewell farewell. Howdy! Lady Wrangler." Twyfford Adamant, another couturier and Caprice's arch-rival, has a brainstorm. "Sackcloth and ashes!" he exclaims. "Perfect for the repentant mood of America!" In no time, sackcloth and ashes are the rage all over the world. "I have seen, in Monte Carlo, an individual dressed in sackcloth and ashes made of heavy silk and black diamonds," announces Tata, Caprice's valet and a spy for the House of Adamant.

"Caprice" was presented by the Ridiculous Theatrical Company, with Ludlam in the title role, in the mid-seventies—a period that in its anti-fashion sentiments bore a good deal of resemblance to our own. At the end of the play, it is neither Caprice nor Adamant but Tata—in drag, as Nicole Newfangle—who wins the "coveted" Lavender Gloves of Fashion award, presented to "the designer who best exemplifies his time," for his Je Suis Fatigué collection.

The word now is that people are tired of fashion, and that fashion is weary of its own excess. In moving to distance ourselves from the free-spending eighties, we have succeeded in putting them so far behind us that it seems inconceivable that the world could have been such a different place so recently. The shopping frenzy has come to a halt, we're told in front-page stories documenting the demise of department-store chains and President Bush's state visit to J. C. Penney's, where he bought four pairs of socks. Meanwhile, members of the baby-boom generation, who were thirtysomething and single when the orgy of materialism got under way, ten years ago, now find themselves on the far side of forty, with children and a mortgage and a full set of adult-size responsibilities.

When the experts are asked to account for the abrupt shift in America's mood, they point to economics and demographics. But other factors have also conspired to bring about the change. Every day, there are matters of life and death—the environment, AIDS, the homeless—impinging on our thinking. In this context, conspicuous consumption, which during the Reagan years was regarded as a badge of personal achievement, comes off as callous and politically incorrect. The heroes of the eighties, who built junk-bond empires and casinos and shopping malls as monuments to themselves, outfitted their wives in dresses by Christian Lacroix, decorated their dining rooms with Napoleonic furniture, and in the process reaffirmed our faith in America as the land of opportunity, lately turn up in the news teetering on the brink of bankruptcy or awaiting trial or awaiting sentencing, and those of us who watched their rise with incredulous fascination can't help feeling that justice has been done. Life no longer seems like the party it was made out to be a decade ago. The people who convened every night on the dance floor of the latest club are now off to A.A. meetings. Sobriety, it appears, is the keynote for the nineties, in our wardrobes as well as in our lives.

The Chanel suit, the uniform of the eighties, with its combined message of career, money, and sex, is losing its totemic powers. Already its glamour has begun to seem quaint, and even Karl Lagerfeld, in his recent collections for Chanel, seems to admit as much, as he ranges farther afield, drawing on hip-hop mannerisms for reinvigorating the old for-



"We got orders to search every cheese on the premises."

mulas and turning out ever-broader parodies of the house themes until it begins to seem that he's contemptuous of the customer herself, a fashion victim who would buy anything festooned with those interlocking "C"s. The Chanel suit (and copies of it) will, of course, remain in our wardrobes, and women will continue to wear it, but what has gradually emerged to take its place in our imagination is an outfit that falls under the category of Clothes, rather than Fashion, with a brand name, like J. Crew or the Gap, rather than a designer's signature on the label.

At the highest level, the New York fashion establishment is still going through the motions: designers parade their new collections on the catwalk, magazine editors continue to photograph and present the clothes as if they were momentous, stores go right on ordering them, and sometimes, though by no means as often as before, customers buy them. But within the industry everyone agrees that these are crisis times. The ideas this past season seemed fewer than ever and farther between; this is not the sort of climate that fosters experimentation. (Interestingly, Marc Jacobs, at Perry Ellis, and Ralph Lauren presented their finest collections to date, suggesting that they're designers who work best within the limitations of established genres—Western in Jacobs' case, nautical in Lauren's.) The Western motif was all over the place, in fact, bringing back memories of the last full-scale Western revival, in the mid-seventies—a time when people turned their back on fashion in favor of "real clothes": jeans and thousand-dollar cowboy boots.

The tide has turned in Europe as well. The clothes being shown there are in many cases getting simpler, stripped of the decoration that has bogged them down for the past decade or so. In Paris, Ines de la Fressange, the former model for Chanel, has opened a boutique on the Avenue Montaigne, selling "basics" like red velvet jeans, suède penny loafers, anoraks, and trenchcoats—clothes that are in the public domain and don't need a famous designer to conceive them. In Milan, Sybilla and Franco Moschino have abandoned runway presentations and invited buyers and editors to their showrooms instead, where the clothes are seen in a "more intimate" context.

But the fashion backlash in Europe is somehow lacking in the reactionary fervor that animates so much of the discourse here. "Is fashion dead?" the alarmists wonder aloud—again. What we tend to forget at moments like this is that although fashion in the *WWD*, designer-label sense of the word may be ailing, fashion in the larger sense—as a means of seduction, as a vague consensus about what's attractive at any given moment, as the expression of some collective fantasy, as a code for information about ourselves—won't be laid to rest until the when we're all walking around stark naked (and what a dull world that will be).

Fashion-bashing isn't a new, or even a recent, development in our culture. There have been recurrent bouts of it all along, playing directly into our national suspicion of ornament and vanity. In the seventies, our grudge against fashion grew out of a newfound feminism: women were portrayed as the innocent victims of a handful of designers who arbitrarily tinkered with hemlines and silhouettes and colors for the sake of change. "Fantasy" was a dirty word; women were to be taken as they were, on their own terms.

"Reality is the best fantasy of all," ads for Liz Claiborne's fragrance, called Realities, now proclaim. One of the pictures shows a woman taking a bath (the bathroom is small and paved in white tile, straightforward and functional-looking—an average bathroom in a middle-class apartment, with none of the sunken tubs and the gold fixtures and the wide-open spaces that characterized the bathrooms-as-stage-sets of the eighties); she is attended by a guy wearing jeans and sneakers, and a naked toddler holding on to the edge of the tub. The glamour that emanates from a suit by Yves Saint Laurent or an evening gown by Oscar de la Renta—the evocations of the Orient, the intimations of chauffeur-driven cars and four-star-hotel suites and fancy-dress balls—is not what we go shopping for when we shop for clothes these days. "Fantasy" is a dirty word once again, but this time for different reasons. Today, we see fantasy as irresponsible, and reality, with all its attendant obligations, is marketed as its own reward.

IF Twyfford Adamant were around to participate in this most recent round of fashion-bashing, he could turn out a line of hair shirts. Instead, there is Giorgio Armani's new A/X Armani Exchange collection. Of all

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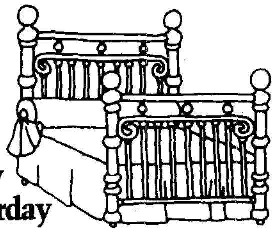

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the designers who are making the pilgrimage back to basic clothing, surely none has gone more basic than Armani. Ads posted in bus shelters for his new A/X store, in SoHo, read: "Armani. Store. Clothing. Basics. Period." The invitation to the store's opening was a big steel nut and bolt in a brown cardboard box. The A/X merchandise, displayed in wooden bins, like produce at a market, is mostly priced from thirty to a hundred dollars—considerably lower than the Emporio Armani line, which was launched in the early eighties as a younger, more casual, less expensive alternative to the designer's signature collection.

Emporio Armani was one of the many so-called bridge, or second, lines intended to meet the aspiring middle class halfway at a time when the jump from mass-market to luxury goods was just too big for most people to make all at once. There were skeptics at the time who warned against stooping to the customer—who counselled that part of any designer's appeal was the prestige attached to his or her name. But, whether out of some conviction that people would find it impossible to go back to lower-priced brands once they'd been introduced to higher quality or out of some faith that snobbery would win out in the end, designers insisted that the bridge-line traffic would move only one way: up. Now, with the economy in a slump, it appears that they didn't stoop low enough. In his A/X collection, Armani is underbidding his own bridge line, appealing to a customer who finds even Emporio Armani too expensive. The great success story in this regard, of course—the example that Armani, like other designers, continually looks to—is the Gap, which has been doing a land-office business in casual, inexpensive, simple clothes for the past several years, while the top of the market has levelled off. Most Gap clothes look as if they had always existed, as if no designer had ever messed with them beyond adding a band of contrasting corduroy to line the cuff or deciding to turn out a classic cotton turtleneck in burnt orange. The designer's hand rests lightly on Armani's A/X line, too: the clothes look not so much designed as thought out, and they make no mention of their ties to fashion.

The problem when clothes become as generic as these, however, is that it gets harder and harder to tell them apart: what is it that makes Armani's A/X different from the Gap or J. Crew or Calvin Klein Sport? What is it that a fashion designer is selling, if not his or her individual vision as it plays itself out in fabrics and colors and cut? With public interest in fashion at a new low ebb, it is not, evidently, the shape of a neckline or the placement of a pocket that is going to incite people to part with their money. The best reasons to buy these clothes are not apparent in the clothes themselves.

Often, in fact, it's the *idea* of the clothes that we find becoming. The manifesto for Esprit's new Ecollection promises organic cottons that have been bred to grow in different colors (eliminating the need for dyes), zippers made from recycled metal and plastic, and buttons crafted from reconstituted glass by "traditional" workers in Ghana. There is even a makeup line for women of scrupulous conscience: Origins (a division of Estée Lauder, launched eighteen months ago) offers products that are botanically based, including lipsticks in recyclable plastic tubes.

In recent ads titled "A Plea for Responsible Consumption," Esprit urged its customers to ask themselves before buying something "whether this is something you really need"—a position most manufacturers would regard as suicidal. While other companies may turn over some portion of their profits to a worthy cause, Esprit has cast itself as nothing less than a force for moral change, willing to take the economic consequences for the sake of "a healthier attitude about consumption."

The Gap's current ad campaign, now in its fourth year—a series of portraits of newspaper columnists, jazz musicians, photographers, actors, art directors—offers the prospect of celebrity to people who have been simply going about their business. Esprit and Levi Strauss have turned this idea into contests of sorts: TV commercials for Levi's 501s (filmed by Spike Lee) cast a spotlight on people who have called an 800 number to report what they do (spelunking, talking backward, flying kites) while they're wearing their button-fly jeans; Esprit selects the stars of its ads from the people who send in suggestions for ways to change the world.

More important than the clothes now is what the designers of the clothes stand for: advertising has become a platform for political opinion, attracting like-minded customers—as if a label were a club that the customer could join by buying the product, or an organization that stood for something for which the customer, by buying the product, could cast a vote. Donna Karan's new ad campaign ("In women we trust") features a woman wearing Donna Karan clothes being sworn in as President of the United States.

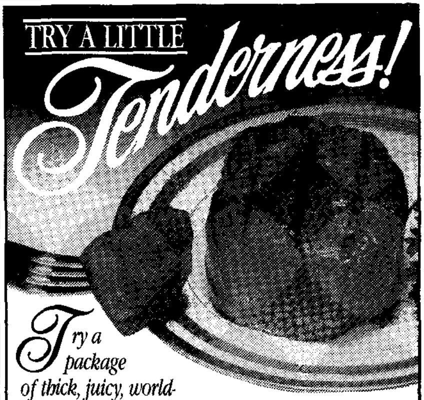
Benetton's long-running campaign on behalf of global brotherly love culminated last year in pictures of a nun kissing a priest and of a bloody, squalling newborn baby still attached to the umbilical cord; neither gives any indication of what Benetton clothes look like. The Guess campaign is a guessing game: what's the product being sold? Set in country-and-Western bars and the back seats of convertibles, and populated by the kind of women who used to be described as "fast," Guess ads, which may run to eight or ten pages, sometimes show the jeans that are the occasion for them, but more often don't. Ads for Donna Karan's hosiery depict a nude woman crouching on a beach—no hosiery. More and more, advertising for clothing is following the format established by fragrance ads, in which the product is so ephemeral as to be invisible and a moment's impression is everything.

Meanwhile, as fashion designers descend from their pedestals and flock to the low end of the market, manufacturers of luxury goods are scrambling to reposition themselves in the mind of the public. Bulgari, the Italian jeweller, is crusading on behalf of the World Wildlife Fund; Hermès on behalf of the Cousteau Society and other environmental causes. "Fortunoff would like to remind you," one recent radio ad announced, "that fine jewelry is not an indulgence or a display of wealth—it's an heirloom."

IN all fashion, there is surely no better barometer of the American public's inner life than Calvin Klein. He says that if his ad campaigns have met with success "it's only because people seem to want something that I'm feeling at the moment." While Klein's clothes, often minimalist to the point of anonymity, are hardly the stuff that history is made of, ads for his fragrances are. Sociologists of the future will find the hopes of the past ten years documented in Obsession's sculptural nudes, who exude a kind of locker-room eroticism (a man caught in mid-stride carrying a woman over his shoulder); in Eternity's beatific images of a family at the beach (a pileup of heads: mother, father, daughter, son); in Escape's adventure scenes (a couple lying on a rocky beach, locked in an embrace, with a mono ski in the foreground). Klein says he wanted to put to rest that fragrance-ad cliché of an ingénue running through a field of daisies—a sentimental image that is irrelevant to the future women imagine for themselves. So he put men and, later, children in the ads, as proof that the women the pictures portray have a full life; he situated them in scenes that are remote but not foreign to us. Klein's progress in these ad campaigns—from the fascination with extreme behavior of all kinds to the romance of marriage and a family to the adrenaline excitement of getaway sports—has been both universal and, by his own admission, autobiographical. Where other companies are now taking the high road, appealing to consumers' social conscience and better judgment, he has stuck to his original tactics. "I'm trying to get at people emotionally," he says. "I'm aiming at what they need and what they're feeling."

The circumstances in Klein's ads are often ambiguous, raising more questions than they answer. Klein says this is intentional. "It's more interesting if I can look at something and not know the whole story, so I can fantasize and use my imagination," he explains. "There's something else going on, and it relates to advertising as well. The whole AIDS problem has changed the way everyone lives. My daughter, all the kids—they're living a different kind of life than we did at their age. I think when people have to be more conservative, when they have to pull back and be careful, that's a time when fantasy maybe plays an even bigger role—through films, through entertainment, through advertising."

A dress by Valentino or a jumpsuit by Jean-Paul Gaultier has implicit in its design a description of the sort of woman who would wear it and of the life she leads. Beyond a few dim echoes of James Dean and ranch hands, however, bluejeans have no such powers of suggestion; they've been a fixture of our wardrobes for such a long time now that it's hard to regard them the way we do articles of fashion. So it's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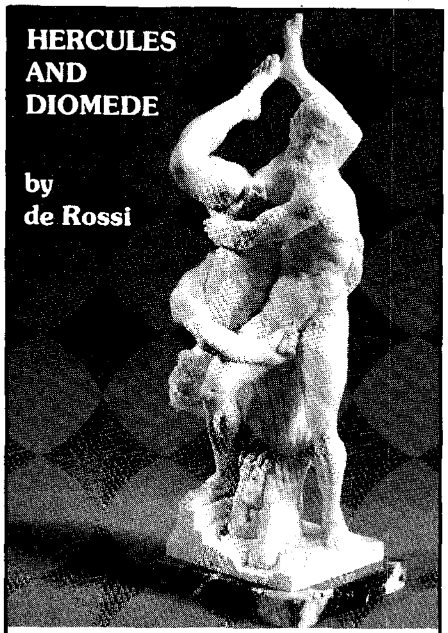

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left to the manufacturers to create a context for jeans, something to trigger the consumer's imagination.

In a hundred-and-sixteen-page advertising supplement to *Vanity Fair* last fall, photographed (like Klein's fragrance ads) by Bruce Weber, Klein staged a rock concert—a world in which jeans are the uniform. "I thought, who are the heroes of today?" he says. "Who are the sex symbols, the people out there that everyone gets excited about? Rock stars are these superstars who earn enormous amounts of money, they have wild crazy lives, and they all wear jeans. Denim and skin—that's what rock concerts are about. I was trying to tie the denim into what's really current, into something that would be provocative." The plot of the supplement, to the extent that there is one, revolves around a group of young men and women, members of a band, onstage and backstage, wearing jeans and leather jackets. A bare-chested guy in jeans manhandles a nude woman (a groupie, perhaps) against the backdrop of a chain-link fence; two pairs of legs, encased in jeans, are intertwined on the hood of a car; a naked man intently eases a woman out of her jeans. There are suggestions of homoeroticism, of autoeroticism—something for everyone. In an interview about the supplement on "CBS This Morning," Klein said, "Jeans are about sex." Jeans *are* about sex in some instances, but they're also about blue-collar jobs and white-collar pastimes. The response to Klein's rock-concert scenario has been, predictably, mixed, with many people finding its premise misguided and tired—like a middle-aged idea of what it's like to be young these days. Still, it picks up the tradition that Klein himself pioneered, in 1980, with TV commercials featuring Brooke Shields in his jeans. ("You wanna know what comes between me and my Calvins? Nothing.") It is Klein's stroke of genius to have portrayed an article of clothing that was essentially utilitarian and proletarian as a fetishistic object.

While most ads for the clothes that qualify as fashion are still standing on ceremony, like an over-the-hill femme fatale who makes eye contact across a crowded room, ads for sports clothes walk right up and start talking personal. Nike is out to reassure women that it knows what they've been through: "You didn't like the way you looked. You didn't like the way your parents looked.... You had your first best friend. You had your first date. You had your second best friend. You had your second first date. You spent hours on the telephone. You got kissed. You got to kiss back. You went to the prom. You didn't go to the prom. You went to the prom with the wrong person. You spent hours on the telephone. You fell in love. You fell in love. You fell in love. You lost your best friend. You lost your other best friend. You really fell in love. You became a steady girlfriend. You became a significant other. You became significant to yourself." Presumably, any manufacturer who understands women this well will know exactly what they want in a pair of sneakers.

Sneakers and sports clothes and jeans have the advantage of being familiar and user-friendly. They constitute the uniform we wear when we're off duty, and if we've now invested them with the sort of aura that we used to bring to a Chanel suit, maybe it's because we're looking beyond our work to other areas of our lives for fulfillment. We tend to think of clothes like this as being outside—or maybe even above—fashion, although that obviously isn't the case. (In denim alone, we've been through stone-washed, acid-washed, black, white, and now colors; button fly, Silver Tab, and "relaxed fit.") But in our minds they signify not the death of fashion but its absence, and by wearing them we purge ourselves of the glut of the eighties. Calvin Klein says he believes that despite all the anti-fashion rhetoric in the air, people still want to feel good about themselves when they get dressed; it's just that what makes them feel good about themselves now is different from what made them feel good about themselves during the Reagan years. Ultimately, it seems that most matters of fashion for us Americans come down to moral issues. We may not have invented this complex, but we've perfected it to such an extent that other cultures—the French, for instance, who are more adept at moderation—would surely find it baffling. It occurs to me that in the long run our attitude toward the clothes we wear isn't so different from the mentality that gives rise to binge eating and starvation diets. Fashion isn't dead—we're just swearing off it for the time being. —HOLLY BRUBACH

BOOKS

mr. lower case

A NIGHTMARE to the typesetter, a puzzle to the student of modern American poetry, E. E. Cummings' colossal "Complete Poems, 1904-1962" (Liveright; $50) arrives with a sizable but oddly muffled thump. Do we need to pay attention any longer to these bizarre-looking verses, with their dizzying shapes and giddy punctuation and wildly irregular dispersions of small and capital letters? If Marianne Moore were alive today, she would no doubt tell us that we do (she once referred to him as a "concentrate of titanic significance," who "does not make aesthetic mistakes"), and so would John Dos Passos, who called him "one of the inventors of our time," and Allen Tate, who considered him "unique" in having created "a unified vision of the modern world." Cummings' appeal for anthologists and composers of college syllabi looks precarious, however: on neither does he exercise the secure right of inclusion enjoyed by contemporaries of his like Stevens and Eliot and Williams and Moore herself. He seems unlike those poets, too, in failing to win a substantial following among today's younger writers; although the poetry scene is diverse enough to resist generalization, it appears safe to say that no noteworthy school of Cummings has emerged. At present, his most fervent devotees may be adolescents, who are likely to feel (as, I confess, I in my adolescence did) a powerful kinship with the poet who stubbornly portrayed himself as "i." In a world of too important, too grownup grownups, Cummings steadfastly remained mr. lower case.

But what is an adult reader to make of him? How are we, nearly a hundred years after his birth (he was born in 1894, in Cambridge, Massachusetts) and more than a quarter century after his death (he died in 1962, at the New Hampshire farm where he had summered since childhood), to resolve the contradictions embodied in Edward Estlin Cummings—this Unitarian minister's son who stocked his poems with whores and booze and profanity, this scion of the Eastern establishment who in youth advocated Communism and in middle age championed McCarthy, this ferocious individualist who depended financially on a parental "allowance" through most of his adult life, this literary guerrilla whose devotion to that hoariest of poetic forms the sonnet was passionate and unwavering?

Whether we choose in the end to laud or censure Cummings, this "revised, corrected, and expanded" edition of his poetry supplies an excellent foundation for judgment; it's a handsome and well-appointed volume. If not quite impeccable (my reading turned up a dropped line, a misspelling, and a false index entry), it exhibits an over-all atmosphere of care, respect, and deliberation. Cummings was a man of grandiose self-visions and immoderate appetites (as is apparent not only in his poetry but in Richard S. Kennedy's helpful if rather softhearted biography, "Dreams in the Mirror," published in 1980), but even he, if presented with this gathering of half a century's work, could hardly ask for more.

The reader, on the other hand, might well ask for less. This thousand-plus-page monument demands shelf space on a scale similar to that of, say, "The Riverside Chaucer" or "John Milton: Complete Poems and Major Prose." And these are poems that run low on the page; a more generous bottom margin would have resulted in an even bulkier production. Whatever Cummings' virtues, he was scarcely a ruthless self-critic, and the opportunity offered by this new collection to wade through dozens and dozens of poems that he deemed unworthy of publication must surely unsettle even his staunchest admirers. And for those readers who, like me, come to Cummings with reservations, expecting a fair measure of vexation and disappointment, this book cannot fail to be something of a horror at times. It would be difficult to overstate the tedium of many of its stretches. The book infuriates in any number of ways—narrowness of intellectual content, sameness of approach (there are twenty-four poems here that begin with "if"), sentimentality, shameless reiteration not merely of themes but of little "tricks" of enjambment, rhyme, punctuation. Perhaps the chief irony is that a poet who so boisterously celebrated that "which is infinite which is yes" seems in the final tally so limited and hedging.

To be sure, there may be a sort of perverse gratification to be had in his most dire work—that pleasure which

"If you took the time to find out what I was going through, you would find out it was you."

those of us who daily feel reproached by the unread classics on our shelves experience on encountering something we know with dead certainty need never be reread. For me, anyway, there was an ignoble joy in discovering, deep in the volume, what must surely be the most irksome series of half a dozen poem openings ever published:

maybe god

is a child
's hand)

*

(fea
therr
ain

:dreamin
g field

*

a like a
grey
rock wanderin

g
through
pasture

*

(im)c-a-t(mo)
b,i;l:e

FallleA
ps!

*

after screamgroa
ning.ish:ly;

*

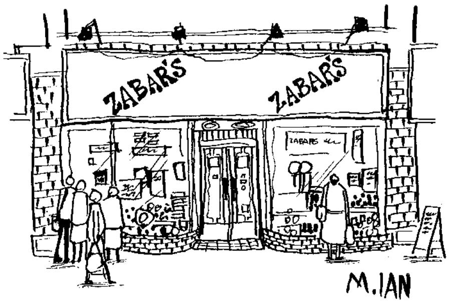
the little horse is newlY

This new edition contains roughly a thousand poems (its table of contents extends for twenty-six pages!), of which something like nine hundred could be excised without use of anesthesia; there is in them no living nerve that one need worry about severing.

Cummings was often, as "Dreams in the Mirror" makes clear, a bilious, unlikable man. Most of his annoying traits need not concern us; they passed with him into the grave. But in one way he left a durable legacy of exasperation: his practice, throughout his career, of unobtrusively inserting little beauties among the dross. (His all but complete eschewal of titles aided concealment.) Occasionally—sometimes for a complete lyric, sometimes for merely a stanza, or even a line—"Complete Poems, 1904-1962" pulses with a light as welcome as that of any star. Now that his poetry has been made exhaustively available, the task for any future editor must be that of judicious consolidation: traversing and ultimately dismissing the vast waste spaces in order to limn a far-flung array of constellations.

READING Cummings' biography, one is not surprised to learn that he was a creature of contradictions, for his work bespeaks an endless fascination with dichotomies. Poem after poem pits "yes" against "no," "us" against "them," "now" against "then." Verses that initially appear formless turn out to reveal the symmetries of a balanced debate. His infatuation with the parenthesis is but one reflection of this tendency; he was constantly responding to the pull of simultaneous voices, the lure of contending, bifurcated discourse.

He is commonly perceived as having two major poetic modes—the satiric and the lyrical. The satires repeatedly take as their subject either mechanization (Cummings' distaste for machines was such that both the telephone and the radio were long banned from his home) or the spiritual failings of modern economic systems, whether capitalistic or Communistic. Most of the best-known lyrical verses are love poems of an unabashedly sentimental and hyperbolic sort ("nor ever did on such a throat / the lips of Tristram slowly dote"). Unfortunately, his temperament frequently unsuited him for either mode. His satires are long on bile but short on bite. Invective was for him a kind of drug, blurring his discernment. When he concludes a poem with the phrase "Humanity / i hate you," readers do not feel chastened and diminished, as they may after Swift or Pope or Auden lashes out against universal folly; rather, it is Cummings who winds up looking small. His are not the verses of a man whose headlong search for humor sometimes led him into cruelty but those of a man whose pursuit of cruelty intermittently yielded humor. And, as one might expect, he was no more discriminating when his mood softened: the vast preponderance of his love poetry seems at once reverential and soupy.



Actually, a somewhat different bisection of Cummings' work might be of greater utility. If most of his political satires either fail to ignite or, like firecrackers, are one-shot affairs, there are a number of poems of a similar breed (fierce and embittered in tone, slangy in language, usually urban in setting) which lodge in the memory. One might call them grotesques. Likewise, if most of the love lyrics are fatally mawkish, there are a number of amorous poems, most of them written late in his life, in which his vows of love are beautifully subsumed by a wonder-struck appreciation of the splendors of the cosmos. One might call these love hymns. The grotesques tend to be sharp-eyed, unmercifully lucid in their relish of the unseemly; they delight in crime, prostitution, deformity, inebriation. The love hymns are characteristically bathed in a sort of incandescent haze, like morning mist pierced by sunlight, and the objects they celebrate—trees, rivers, mountains—materialize without precise descriptions or identifications; in their foggy indeterminacy, they represent all trees, all rivers, all mountains.

Cummings' flair for the grotesque often took a highly concentrated form. His was the gift, not always enviable, of compressing extraordinary ugliness into a few lines:

a clown's smirk in the skull of a baboon

*

the leatherfaced
woman with the crimson
nose and coquettishly-
cocked bonnet

*

his peaked head smoulders
like a new turd in April

*

the chunklike nose on which always the four
tablets of perspiration erectly sitting

*

(with flesh like an old toy balloon)

*

a smile masturbates softly in the vacant
lot of his physiognomy

*

the flyspecked abdominous female

*

Dick Mid's large bluish face without eyebrows

The fascination on display here with bodily fluids and functions—with what

Cummings called the body's "hows"—in conjunction with the guilt bred in the bones of this son of a minister made him an ideal conveyor of queasy, illicit desires. He captured, as few poets have, the atmosphere of tawdry, sweat-slimed resolution which one associates with burlesque shows and blue movies:

the oval shove
of hiding pleasure

*

as in the hairy notching of clenched thighs

a friendless dingy female frenzy bubbles

*

a comic tadpole wriggling in delicious mud

*

O It's Nice To Get Up In,the slipshod
mucous kiss
of her riant belly's fooling bore

*

My gorgeous bullet in tickling intuitive flight
aches,just,simply,into,her.

*

the chewed stump

of a mouth,huge dropping of a flesh from
hinging thighs
. . . merci . . . i want to die

*

when for two
dollars i fill her hips with boys and girls

Most of these poems were written early in Cummings' career, before his first marriage. (He had two disastrous marriages; then, in 1932, he took up with Marion Morehouse, whom Edward Steichen called "the greatest fashion model I ever shot," and remained happily with her until his death. It is not certain whether they ever married.) Cummings knew well the raffish world he wrote about. As a young man, he drank heavily and consorted with prostitutes, and in 1917, when he was in an ambulance-service unit of the Red Cross, an absurd string of misunderstandings led to his spending three months in a French internment center as a suspected traitor. Sex in these poems is a wary, predatory business, summed up in a phrase from one of his sonnets: "the face in a hoop of grim ecstasy." One is reminded of the louche demimondes of Matisse and Manet and Picasso. (Cummings was not only an aficionado of modern art but a dedicated painter, who for many years considered himself foremost a visual artist.) Many of the best poems in this mode are sonnets ("the mind is its own beautiful prisoner," "you asked me to come:it was raining a little," "the dirty colours of her kiss have just"), of which a particularly vivid example—the voice randy but calculating, admiring but circumspect—appeared in his first book:

my girl's tall with hard long eyes
as she stands,with her long hard hands
keeping
silence on her dress,good for sleeping
is her long hard body filled with surprise
like a white shocking wire,when she smiles
a hard long smile it sometimes makes
gaily go clean through me tickling aches,
and the weak noise of her eyes easily files
my impatience to an edge—my girl's tall
and taut,with thin legs just like a vine
that's spent all of its life on a garden-wall,
and is going to die. When we grimly go to
bed
with these legs she begins to heave and
twine
about me,and to kiss my face and head.

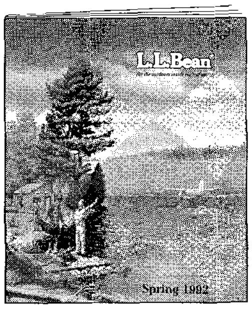
Among the love hymns, the best-known (deservedly so, for it is arguably one of the great short lyrics of our time) is "anyone lived in a pretty how town." This is the tale of two all but anonymous villagers, called anyone and noone, whose passage through life (in a mere thirty-six lines, they fall in love, marry, age, and die) is enacted alongside the rotations of the seasons, the yawning hugeness of the heavens. Here are the final stanzas:

all by all and deep by deep
and more by more they dream their sleep
noone and anyone earth by april
wish by spirit and if by yes.

Women and men(both dong and ding)
summer autumn winter spring
reaped their sowing and went their came
sun moon stars rain

The poem in many ways—its chiming nonsense sounds, its jumbled syntax, its reliance on a pure stress metre, its "imperfect," assonantal rhymes—is a sibling to nursery rhyme, but it evinces as well a deeply mature, even sagelike awareness of the grandeur and pathos of Time; this is Mother Goose married to Ecclesiastes. Its sweep is spectacular, and when we read, in an early stanza, of "Women and men(both little and small)" we may hear an echo of the "grete and smale" townspeople in Chaucer; the centuries lie open, and echoes carry freely over immense distances.

This ambitious compounding of the sublunary and the supernal, of time and timelessness, informs a number of poems in "XAIPE," which was published in 1950. There is a remarkable sequence of five lyrics—65 through 69—



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in which Cummings, uncharacteristically, scarcely makes a misstep. Perhaps the loveliest of them is 66 ("the great advantage of being alive"), which, in a tone of awestruck rapture, plays with variations on the phrase "we are in love":

> that love are in we,that love are in we
>
> *
>
> —for love are in we are in love are in we
>
> *
>
> for you are and i am and we are(above
> and under all possible worlds)in love

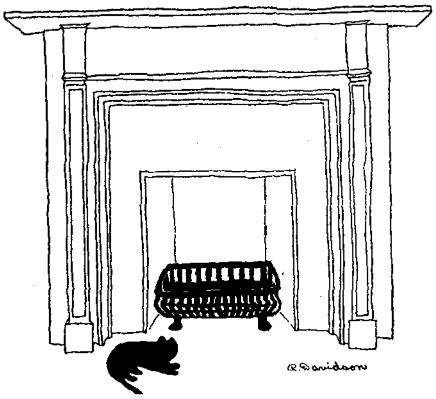
The topsy-turvy jubilation of the concluding line—"For love are in you am in i are in we"—mirrors the elated, confused blending of bodies in the sexual act. The jaded and distrustful gropings that darkened so many of his grotesques have at last yielded to an act in which both parties are celebrants. Although Cummings was far from elderly when he composed this lyric—he was probably in his mid-fifties—he had long been suffering from debilitations associated with age: severe arthritis, and back problems so unrelenting that he was compelled to wear a corset, which he dubbed his "Iron Maiden." The love poems of this time, written for his beloved Marion (who herself suffered so grievously from arthritis that she once required months of hospitalization), happily fuse the tranquil and the jumpy; the poet, having thrown off his suspicions and aggressions, bounds forward in a carefree show of purest play.

Whether Cummings was pursuing the ugly or the beautiful, his prime strength lay in his unexpected concisions—those passages in which his weird locutions enable him to speak with greater briskness and distillation than ordinary discourse allows. You might, for instance, rephrase a line like "anyone's any was all to her" in a variety of ways ("whatever mattered at all to him mattered greatly to her," perhaps, or "his least desire was everything in the world to her"), but never more tersely, or more appealingly. Similarly, the reader has no trouble decoding the strange final phrase of one of the loveliest lyrics in "XAIPE": "for also then's until"—which might be paraphrased as "because winter is likewise transitory and will give way to spring." One would have trouble, though, expressing the notion with anything like equivalent compaction. In Cummings' best moments, one does not feel simply that there is method in the madness of his eccentricities; one stands momentarily convinced that he speaks more directly—even more logically—than other poets do. The resulting exhilaration goes beyond what is provided by mere literary excellence. This is that rare, tonic satisfaction which comes from feeling advantageously placed: one has had the privilege of glimpsing a kind of agility that cannot be found elsewhere.

ANY author who dies before his creative juices are spent can be said to have died young, but we regret the passing of certain artists for extra-aesthetic reasons as well: we long to know how they would have responded to some later historical event or social trend. One would like to see what Hemingway might have made of the women's movement, say, or what Hart Crane would have done with gay liberation. It is delicious to think of Cummings dealing with the late sixties—the counterculture, the peace movement, the "greening" of America. Is it unfair to suppose that this antimaterialist, pacifist, protoenvironmentalist would have been profoundly discomfited by the triumph of so much of what he stood for? Wouldn't his constant cranky desire to be seen as a hard-pressed loner have insured his recoiling from the hippie's brotherly embrace?

What are we to do, then, when his poetry seems to foreshadow trends he would probably have repudiated? Is he to be faulted if some of his phrases ("ours/is the now to grow") resemble the psychobabbling of a pop therapist on the talk-show circuit? Are we to herald him as a prophet if at times he tosses off an epigram ("tomorrow is our permanent address") that sounds like a squib on a New Age calendar? Can we approach a poet who actually opened five different poems with the phrase "love is . . ." and not recall Ali MacGraw and Ryan O'Neal emoting their way toward the deathbed scene in "Love Story"? And what about those lines which sound like rough drafts for Paul Simon's "The Sounds of Silence":

> silently singing
> a song more silent
> than silence



Certainly Cummings taxes our forbearance. I suspect that many readers of the new edition will, as I did, fix upon some diverting pet peeve in the hope that periodic annoyance will keep their energy from flagging. Lord knows there is a wide array of tics to choose from. One might focus on his bottomless appetite for "un" constructions (undeath, unlife, unwisdom, unnoise, unsits, uneyes, unsmaller). Or on his penchant for cumbersome adverbs (relaxingly, sizelessly, floatingly, smoothloomingly). Or on his addiction to "illimitable" and "illimitably." Or on his blithe embrace of easy paradoxes ("exactitudes of imprecision," "depths of height," "mere eternity"). My own bugbear was his habit of applying the language of punctilio to the nebulous or amorphous ("accurate strenuous lips of incorruptible Nothing," "exact smile," "ladies accurately dead," "correct fingers," "accurate boy mouth," "the accurate moon," "little accurate saints," "the accurate demure ferocious rhythm of precise laziness," "exact tombs," "to exactly kiss," "accurate gloom").

But more disconcerting still for those readers who treasure a number of the poems must be Cummings' practice of repackaging whatever has served him well in the past. In poem after poem, I came on stray echoes of "anyone lived in a pretty how town"; he was forever transforming the successful into less successful variants.

Fortunately, the reverse is true as well. There is hardly a single recurrent vice in Cummings' work that does not, if one waits patiently, enjoy an apotheosis. Consider that small "i." If irresistible to the adolescent reader, it is bound to strike most adults as an affectation. Isn't there something overweening in its conspicuous modesty? It would be far more palatable, certainly, if it were not ubiquitous; one comes to see that his was a Cummingscentric (worse yet, a cummingscentric) universe. Nonetheless, in an eight-line miniature written toward the end of his life, the device finds redemption:

> who are you,little i
>
> (five or six years old)
> peering from some high
>
> window;at the gold
>
> of november sunset
>
> (and feeling:that if day
> has to become night
>
> this is a beautiful way)

New life is breathed into that overworked pun of I/eye, for this is both a "little i" (an unformed creature, a coalescing existence) and a "little eye" (a new, awed observer of Nature's breadth and subtlety). The phrase works marvellously, and so do the rhymes, the parentheses, the wedding of humble subject to simple style.

For this reader, Cummings will forever remain a poet who energetically explored a number of cul-de-sacs: the limits of intelligibility, of punctuational eccentricity, of fragmentation, of—literally—unreadability. To later generations of poets his unwitting message is: *You needn't devote so much time to this or that byway as I did.* Sometimes, though, he says something else: *What does it matter if I reached a dead end, leaving you who would follow me nowhere to go?* For in the rubble of the road's termination, here and there stones blaze, wildflowers turn openhandedly to the light, bees are belly-deep in pollen.

—BRAD LEITHAUSER

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

A LANDING ON THE SUN, by Michael Frayn (Viking; $21). Mr. Frayn's usual concern is comedy, but this is a serious—or half-serious, anyway—novel about all the big, ordinarily eye-glazing questions: the nature of happiness, the meaning of life, and so on. Luckily, the plot is less that of a philosophy text than that of a thriller, with the protagonist, a lonely and depressed British civil servant named Brian Jessel, investigating and re-creating the top-secret and ultimately tragic experiments undertaken a generation ago by a pair of his colleagues—a female professor and a Cabinet Office functionary who bears an odd resemblance to Jessel himself. What really saves the book from excessive gravity, though, is the nimbleness of Mr. Frayn's imagination. Poignant moments slide almost imperceptibly into funny ones, and vice versa, and the story achieves a pleasing degree of lightness by being set in a kind of Civil Service garretscape—a mazelike realm of Admiralty attics and stairways and rooftops, with the rest of the world forty feet below.

THE KINDNESS OF WOMEN, by J. G. Ballard (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $19.95). In "Empire of the Sun" Mr. Ballard devised a fusion of novel and memoir to convey the terrors and exhilarations of childhood years spent in a Japanese internment camp near Shanghai during the Second World War. The remarkable second volume of this autobiographical fiction follows the reverberations of that experience through the adult life of the inwardly dissociated narrator, Jim. As a young man in postwar Britain, Jim tries to shrug off his past with a combination of bravado and morbidity—first, by studying medicine, then by training to become a bomber pilot. He eventually becomes a writer and suburban family man, but this idyll ends with the death of his wife, and Jim goes on to trace the links between his own deep turmoil and "the secret logic" of the sixties, with its glamorized media violence, its hallucinogens, and its admixture of perversity and millennial hope. "The one thing we treasure most is a corrupt version of ourselves," a friend tells Jim; but the book is not so much about the self-victimization of a survivor as it is about the decades-long process of successfully coming to terms with an insoluble past.

THE WEIGHT OF WINTER, by Cathie Pelletier (Viking; $22.95). This novel's mystical evocation of nature and history in the tiny town of Mattagash, Maine, does not balance with its more prosaic and rewarding emotional life, but the book, a sequel to the author's "Once Upon a Time on the Banks," is so funny and wrenching that one happily skates over the rough patches. Once again, we encounter Amy Joy Lawler, twenty years older than when we left her, abandoned at the altar; and once again there is Pike Gifford, Jr., living off disability payments for an

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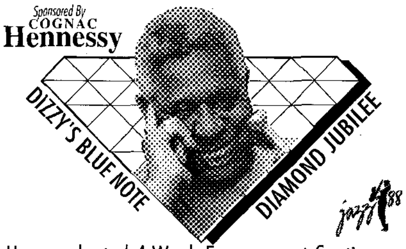

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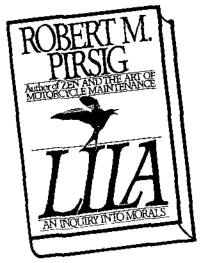
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imaginary ailment, half of which go to support his family, the other half to a bar of which he is a devotee. The funny parts involve things like Pike's addressing his wife (whom he calls Judge Wapner) from the next room because she can read him "like a book" and his sister-in-law commenting, "It'd have to be a comic book, then." The wrenching parts of this inventive and crowded novel also involve Pike, and Amy Joy's mother, an old-age home, Amy Joy's empty womb, and helplessly terrorized children.

GENERAL

A SECRET COUNTRY: THE HIDDEN AUSTRALIA, by John Pilger (Knopf; $23). A scalding portrayal of modern Australia by an award-winning Australian journalist. Mr. Pilger, reminding us that Australia was once one of the most progressive nations, with the most equitable distribution of wealth in the world, declares that his country has been transformed, in a brief two decades, into "a society of established venality," where life is controlled from the top by a group of complacent politicians and predatory businessmen who call themselves, jocularly, the Order of Mates. One result of this alliance is a dramatic increase in poverty and homelessness. Another is that the situation of the Aborigines, living in terror of police violence, is, according to the author, in some respects worse than South African apartheid. A compelling chapter details the fate of Gough Whitlam's liberal government of 1972-75, which instigated a model program of humane legislation but was sabotaged by right-wing reaction, with help from the C.I.A. This is a saddening but enlightening book, and one that can be read as a warning, Mr. Pilger believes, to other democratic societies.

WOODROW WILSON: A BIOGRAPHY, by August Heckscher (Scribners; $35). Mr. Heckscher has done a wonderful job of conveying Wilson's personality as well as his achievements. With the biographer's help, we watch fragile, dyslexic Tommy Wilson transform himself into an inspiring teacher and admired author, an innovative president of Princeton, a reform governor of New Jersey, and President of the United States. Through it all, Wilson met the explicit and tacit demands of his Presbyterian-minister forebears, retaining their devotion to principle and duty while discarding narrow sectarianism. Another long-lasting characteristic was less fortunate: Wilson tended to drive himself beyond his strength, finally suffering a stroke that incapacitated him as he campaigned—more accurately, crusaded—for American entry into the League of Nations, in 1919. Mr. Heckscher's approach suggests that the melodramatic clichés about Wilson are only partly true: he was not quite a babe in the European woods at Versailles, nor was he invariably an inept politician at home; he was certainly an idealist, who gave his life for his visionary (or maybe not so visionary) cause; he was also an egoist with a self-confidence that bordered on arrogance.

UNEARTHING ATLANTIS: AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL ODYSSEY, by Charles Pellegrino (Random House; $23). In 1967, Greek archeologists began uncovering a city on the island of Thera, in the eastern Mediterranean, which had been buried by a volcanic eruption in 1628 B.C. The explosion was so violent that its climatic effects are recorded in Chinese annals and in the tree rings of bristlecone pines in California; its effects on humans appear in Egyptian history and in the Book of Exodus. The destruction may have accelerated the decline of Minoan civilization, and Mr. Pellegrino suspects that the city's disappearance was also the source for the myth of Atlantis. As he ranges, in this account of the excavations, through cosmology, geology, vulcanology, history, and prehistory, we catch his enthusiasm for the process of discovery, and we grasp, too, his awe at the precariousness of human achievement: the remains on Thera suggest levels of comfort, complexity, and charm that were not duplicated for millennia.

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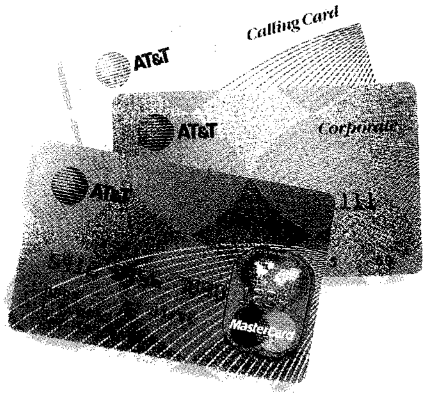

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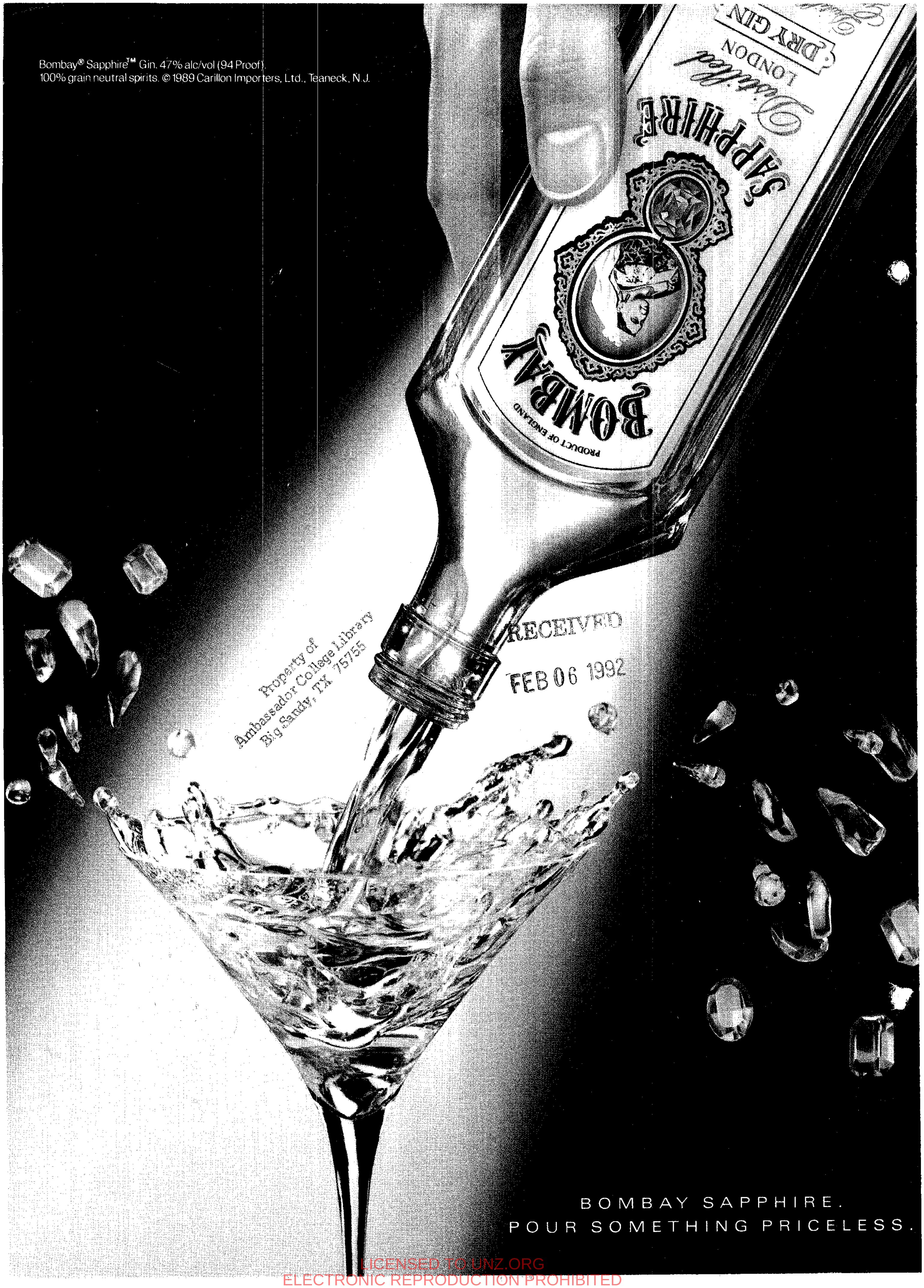

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